Heat Index

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Heat Index

by Mafy_mod

Summary

When a heatwave strikes, everyone's biggest concern is how to function as a proper human being alongside the extreme heat. For Bakugou, his biggest concern is to not inadvertently cause monumental explosions due to sweating nitroglycerin like a fountain.
Luckily, he discovers that Todoroki serves as the perfect temperature regulator body pillow.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Chapter 1

How exactly did I end up in a situation like this…? , sighed Todoroki in the back of his mind. He used his left hand to wipe the sweat coating his forehead before he dropped it back down to his imprisoned body, the springs on the bed creaking just the slightest in protest.

Why was he imprisoned to a bed, you may ask? Because Bakugou Katsuki had decided that the right side of his body was essential for him to be able to sleep throughout the record-breaking heatwave currently hitting half of the world.

And how did Bakugou discover that 'cheat code', you must be wondering too? It all began with an explosion. A very big explosion.

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It was the middle of the night. The moon shone high in the sky, dotted with stars one could hardly see in the metropolitan area of Tokyo. The thermometers read 31ºC - despite the late hour in the night, despite being the middle of September.

Class 1-A's dorm was in utter silence, with only the cicadas ever so often singing in the patio located in the middle of the building. Everything was calm, peaceful, just a regular night in U.A. High School.

Until a sudden deafening explosion rocked the entirety of the building around, titanic shockwaves coursing through its reinforced structure.

Doors opened in a row and fully awake students who had been

sleeping so peacefully half a second ago rushed towards the explosion's site.

"What happened!?" yelped Midoriya right away as soon as he exited the elevator together with the other residents of the male side of the 2nd and 3rd floors on the 4th floor. "Are we being attacked by villains again!?"

"I have no idea!" roared back Kirishima, one of his hands continuously banging on Bakugou's door. "Hey, Bakugou! Are you okay, dude!?"

A loud 'fuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuck!!' was the only audible answer before the door was kicked out of its hinges, hitting Kirishima straight on his (luckily hardened) face.

"I… Haa… am going to kill something… Haa…" panted Bakugou, slowly stepping outside of the bedroom spewing black smoke. His whole body was drenched in a mixture of sweat and water from the fire sprinkler system, and small droplets of a nitroglycerin-charged liquid fell from his clenched fists. "Fuckin' climate change, get ready to be slaughtered real nice... "

"What…?" interjected the other students in nearly complete unison as they observed Bakugou walk towards the elevator with flabbergasted expressions.

"Is there any villain called 'Climate Change'...?" asked Kaminari with a whispering voice.

"Technically, yes," acknowledged Tokoyami with a small nod of his bird-shaped head. "It's a villain that has haunted humankind since ages before Quirks first appeared. A terrifying enemy that threatens to wipe out all life from the planet Earth… It all began at the wake of the

Industrial Revolution, when man dared to-"

"Um… Kacchan, are you okay?" hesitantly asked Midoriya, following his childhood friend after having rolled his eyes around just the slightest at Tokoyami's ongoing overdramatic explanation on climate change. "Is your Quirk going out of control?"

"Fuck off, Deku! Unless you want to get blown up together with all the extra carbon dioxide around this area!!" roared Bakugou, glaring daggers at Midoriya as he impatiently waited for the elevator to return to the 4th floor. "Shit…! Who said climate change is just a scientific ploy…? Bring them over to me, I'll shove this into them from their asses all the way up to their rotten brains!!! Argh, shit! Not again!"

As if reacting to his heated rage, Bakugou's hands started crackling slightly, shortly after exploding into blinding flash grenade-like devices just as the elevator's door opened.

"Woah!" yelped Satou, a large, thick wall of ice appearing before him and Todoroki almost as fast as the blinding explosion.

"What's going on?" asked Todoroki, opening a hole on the ice wall with his fiery left hand. He couldn't quite understand what was happening on the 4th floor but with the way Bakugou was cussing non-stop, Midoriya was rolling around on the floor screaming for his stinging, half-blinded eyes and all the other students' flabbergasted open mouths… he was certain there was no villain around, at least.

"K-Kacchan… a warning first, please!?" whimpered Midoriya, rubbing his green eyes with the pads of his fingers.

"I told you to fuck off, didn't I!?" roared Bakugou, desperately trying to wipe his sweaty palms on his soaked sleeping wear. He turned his

head towards the elevator with a sharp movement. “And you, Half-and-Half Bastard! Hurry up and get that stuff out of my way! I need a shower ASAP!”

“Aizawa-sensei is definitely on his way here. Shouldn’t you go talk to him rather than go take a shower?” pointed out Iida, helping the half-blinded Midoriya to a standing position.

“You do that, yeah, Class President?” scoffed Bakugou, his feet impatiently tapping on the floor as he waited for Todoroki to melt the ice barricading the elevator. “Me taking a bath and getting some fuckin’ sleep after three whole sleepless nights takes precedence to blowing up with pro hero Eraser Head, got it? Done yet, Todoroki? Great, good night, suckers!”

With those words, Bakugou bulldozed his way inside of the elevator and pressed the ground floor button, not even giving enough time for Todoroki and Satou to get off.

“I thought your Quirk worked better with hot weather,” pointed out Todoroki, his voice breaking the silent ice inside of the elevator.

“Yes, hot weather, not extreme weather!” said Bakugou after clicking his tongue. “Nitroglycerin gets extremely unstable at high temperatures! You never studied chemistry, you wannabe-honour-student!?”

“What about the AC in your room?” asked Satou, slowly taking a couple of steps back away from Bakugou - at least as far as the elevator allowed him to.

“If it wasn’t totally busted when it stopped working three days ago, then it sure is now, together with my whole freakin’ room,” grumbled

Bakugou, a bulging vein twitching in anger on his forehead. “Not that it was helping much in the first place. It only made it worse whenever I was outside.”

“A shower won’t help you much either,” added Todoroki. “I’m sure chemistry classes taught you that nitroglycerin isn’t easily soluble in water. You’d rather rub your hands with alcohol or acetone to lessen the intensity of the explosions.”

“‘Done that already!” roared Bakugou, clicking his tongue in annoyance right after. “But it doesn’t work that well when I’m constantly sweating like a pig and adding fresh batches of nitroglycerin one after the other, now does it? A cold shower at least cools me down for the next hour or so.”

“Freezing your hands then?” suggested Todoroki, eyeing the nitroglycerin factory as he said such. Two large blocks of ice instantly formed around Bakugou’s fists, throwing him slightly off-balance with their sudden appearance. “Better?”

“Ngh… One! Have you ever heard of fucking frostbite!?” roared Bakugou, swinging one of his makeshift ice maces at Todoroki. “Two! The moment these things start to melt, you and the whole damned school are gonna wish to be at least 5 kilometres away from me!! Last but not least! All I need is less than 13ºC to not blow up with anything anymore. There’s absolutely no need for below freezing tempera- Achoo! Fuck! You’re only making things even worse for me, you damned Half-and-Half brainless moron!”

“Sorry,” apologised Todoroki with his usual blank demeanour.

When the elevator arrived at the ground floor, Bakugou made an automatic beeline towards the male bathing area, not sparing a single second to the small group of female classmates anxiously waiting for

the elevator's arrival.

"What happened?" asked Yaoyorozu, quickly looking at Todoroki and Satou by the elevator's entrance and the fuming Bakugou on his way to the bathing area. "What was that explosion? And why are Bakugou-san's hands stuck in ice?"

"Ah… To make the long story short, Bakugou's Quirk is not working properly at the moment and Todoroki probably just made it worse," answered Satou, nervously taking glances at Bakugou's back until he disappeared from sight.

"Why is his Quirk going out of control?" asked Uraraka, her head slightly tilted to the right.

"Oh, the nitroglycerin in his sweat is probably reacting at the heatwave's abnormal high temperatures," concluded Yaoyorozu, figuring out the current situation with just a couple of short explanatory sentences. "Once the ice in his hands melt, the nitroglycerin accumulated in the water will most likely destabilise with the temperature change and enter in combustion, resulting in more explosions. Todoroki-san, you definitely messed up this time."

"Sorry," apologised Todoroki once again, this time accompanied by a slight slumping of his shoulders.

"Aizawa-sensei should be on his way here," noted Ashido. "It'll be safer to unfreeze Bakugou's hands while he's erasing his Quirk. It might not explode that way… maybe? Though I'm worried about his hands getting frostbite by that time."

"If he's unconsciously causing explosions because of a heatwave alone, I don't want to imagine what will happen if he needs to have his

hands wrapped in bandages during a heatwave…" said Satou, a shudder crawling up his spine at the thought alone. "He'd destroy the whole school..."

"Sorry…" apologised Todoroki for the third time, his blank expression now resembling a misbehaving puppy after having been severely scolded by its owner.

By the time every 1-A student gathered on the ground floor, Aizawa, their homeroom teacher, was already halfway through with the detailed tale of why the fire alarm went off and a bedroom had become muddy black with water and soot.

"Now I see," acknowledged Aizawa with a single short nod of his head. "Todoroki, Kirishima and Sero, come with me to the bathing area. The rest of you should get outside of the dorm. The building has been built to sustain extensive damage but better safe than sorry."

"What's the plan, Aizawa-sensei?" asked Kirishima once the two groups separated, one towards the bathing area, the other towards the safety offered by distance from the volatile student.

"My Quirk can prevent Bakugou from secreting more nitroglycerin but I can't do much about the one he already produced," explained Aizawa. "Which means we need to safely isolate and store it so it doesn't blow up on its own. Todoroki, you need to regulate the temperature inside of the bathing area and slowly get it high enough for the ice to melt but not high enough to cause an explosion. Kirishima, use your hardening to slowly break the ice around his hands and get it away from his skin as soon as possible. Sero, use your tape to wrap any big chunks of ice that aren't fully melted yet to prevent the nitroglycerin from spreading through the whole bath."

"Got it," acknowledged the three students in unison.

“Bakugou, how are you doing?” asked Aizawa as they stepped inside of the bathing area.

“How about I answer that one after I get some freaking sleep?” snorted Bakugou, sat down underneath a showerhead, the cold water running at full power. “Better yet, after the heatwave ends?”

“I can’t give you an end date for this one nor assure you that another heatwave won’t happen so you’d better find some countermeasures to extreme weather as soon as possible,” instructed Aizawa, squirting a few eye droplets to his Quirk’s source before he activated it and erased Bakugou’s. “You guys can start.”

“We’ll get this ice out of you in a jiffy,” reassured Kirishima, crouching down next to Bakugou. He readily hardened his fingertips and started lightly tapping on the small ice boulder covering his right hand. “Without any more explosions, if you will.”

“Bakugou, sorry…” apologised Todoroki, also crouching down beside Bakugou. He activated the Quirk on the left side of his body just the bare enough to be warmer than the usual human body temperature, slowly raising it at nearly unnoticeable levels.

“Yeah, yeah, whatever,” scoffed Bakugou, rolling his eyes around at both the reassuring words and the apology.

The ice removal process was slow and lengthy, with several pauses to allow the pro hero Eraser Head to blink his eyes and add a bit more of the eyedrops. By the time Sero wrapped the last chunk of nitroglycerin-charged ice, the night could already be called early morning.

“Aizawa-sensei… Can we please have a day off today…?” groaned Sero, sprawled on the moist floor of the bathing area. “Or at least have permission to sleep during classes…?”

“A night without sleep won’t do you, teenagers, any harm,” stated Aizawa, squirting the small amount of eyedrops liquid left in the pocket-sized squeeze bottle into his dry, tired eyes. “Bakugou, go to the infirmary and have Recovery Girl check your hands. Todoroki, go with him. Tell the others it’s safe to come in already on your way out.”

“Okay,” meekly acknowledged Todoroki - the totally opposite reaction that Bakugou had.

“I don’t need an escort to the infirmary. The problem’s my hands, not my legs,” grumbled Bakugou, a sour expression on his features as he picked himself up and took off his soaked shirt. The wet slap his shirt gave to his back when he threw it over his shoulder must have been stronger than he had intended, for his knees wobbled around and his vision swoon his surroundings around into a misty mess. “Ngh…!”

“Right. This makes it the fourth night you’ve gone without any sleep so you could maintain your Quirk stabilised. Of course the problem is your hands, your legs, your whole body,” said Aizawa with the most deadpan expression all students present had ever seen him do. “Todoroki, you’re definitely going with him. Even if that means you have to drag him there like a sack of potatoes. Understood?”

“I don’t need any help!” roared Bakugou, loudly stomping his feet on the floor. He then proceeded to yomp his exhausted body out of the bathing area.

“Todoroki,” shortly said Aizawa, the thumb pointed in the sulky student’s direction spelling everything else.

“Bakugou, don’t be so stubborn,” sighed Todoroki, a quick run enabling him to catch up with the blonde. He grabbed him by the waist and hoisted him up to his shoulder, following their teacher’s instructions to a T.

“Put me down, Half-and-Half Bastard!!” roared Bakugou, flailing both his arms and legs around in hopes to hit Todoroki nice and hard and free himself. It didn’t go as well as he had planned. “And I’m not being stubborn! Now let me down!”

“Is Recovery Girl at the infirmary at these hours?” asked Todoroki, ignoring Bakugou completely to hear out his teacher’s answer. He could hear the cussing and yelling but his brain registered none of them.

“I’ll contact her and ask her to go there,” said Aizawa, waving his hand at them with a shooing motion. “Okay, Sero, Kirishima, time to dispose of the nitroglycerin around here. Go call some of the other guys to help give this bath a good spring cleaning.”

“Bakugou, stay well behaved, ‘kay?” said Kirishima with a sparkling smile, patting Bakugou’s back on his way to the dorm’s front door.

“Want me to tape his wrists and ankles, Todoroki?” jokingly asked Sero, a shit-eating grin on his lips as he also rushed past them. “His mouth too, while I’m at it. Ahahaha!”

“I’m gonna fuckin’ kill all of you once this is over!!” threateningly roared Bakugou, once again erupting in a raging limb flailing battle that ended up being yet another fruitless waste of energy.

“What’s this, Bakugou? Did you go from a pile of dynamite to a sack of potatoes at daybreak, like a war-time Cinderella would?” snorted Mineta when he saw Todoroki coming out of the dorm building with an extremely pissed off Bakugou sprawled over his shoulder.

“Do you want me to bury you with both, since you’re asking for it so nicely?” barked back Bakugou, throwing Mineta the middle finger. “No! Don’t even try me, Deku!”

“O-Okay…!” squeaked Midoriya, having been cut off before he could even say the letter A for ‘Are you okay, Kacchan?’

“Geez, I’m surrounded by pests…” grumbled Bakugou under his breath, his eyes still stuck to the small crowd steadily decreasing in size. The building was now safe and sound, most were definitely going to go back to their rooms and get a couple of hours of sleep before the first period of classes started. That annoyed him deeply, for more than one reason. “Maybe I should have destroyed the whole damned dorm and buried them underneath the debris, rather than spend so many sleepless nights trying to not blow up anything…”

“That’s just the sleep deprivation talking,” said Todoroki, not the least bit shocked about Bakugou’s terrorist tendencies - or at least he hoped said terrorist tendencies were truly just the result of sleep deprivation.

“Sure, whatever. Now put me down!” ordered Bakugou, throwing a punch underneath Todoroki’s ribs, later pushing and pushing his knuckles into his torso. “It’s barely daybreak but it’s already plenty of hot! Way too hot to be so close to a fuckin’ fire machine!”

“Then…” mumbled Todoroki, his words trailing off as he lowered Bakugou to the floor and then readily lifted him up once again, switching him from his left shoulder to the right one. “Is this side better?”

“The floor is better!!” roared Bakugou, hitting the back of Todoroki’s head with his elbow. “Ugh… You’re so freaking annoying! Hurry up taking me to the infirmary and then scram!”

“Yes, yes,” sighed Todoroki as a conversation finisher. From there on and until they reached the main school building, it was silence.

Huh… It is better, noted Bakugou in the back of his head, having equally decided that any further resistance would just tire him out more than he already was. He released all of the tension on his muscles and allowed his body to lay completely inert over Todoroki’s left shoulder as if a futon airing out in the sun. *Colder than the right side but still warm enough to not be called icy. It actually… does feel... pretty good…*

“We’re here,” announced Todoroki, momentarily halting in front of the infirmary’s door before he slid it open. “Bakugou?”

“Huh? Oh. Right,” babbled Bakugou, his brain startling awake at the call of his name. He slid his naked torso against Todoroki’s shoulder, walking inside of the infirmary on his own.

Recovery Girl was already inside.

“Aizawa-kun has explained to me what happened,” said Recovery Girl, urging the two students towards the examination area with her soft, wrinkly smile. “Let me see your hands, Bakugou-kun.”

After a quick examination and a small healing kiss to the top of his head, the infirmary visit was deemed as over.

“The frostbite was only in its initial stages so your hands didn’t suffer a lot of damage. However, just to play safe, do keep an eye on them. If you notice any changes to your performance or feel any type of stinging pain in them, come see me again,” advised Recovery Girl, lightly patting Bakugou’s lower back as she walked towards the door. “Aizawa-kun also told me that your bedroom is unusable at the moment so you can rest here in the infirmary until classes start. If by the time I start my working hours you’re still sleeping, I’ll give you a class exemption leave for today. Sleep deprivation is extremely bad for a growing body. Make sure to change out of those soaked clothes too, or you’ll catch a cold. Feel free to use the extra gym jerseys kept on the supply cupboard.”

“Okay,” acknowledged Bakugou with a small nod of his head.

With a closing door, the infirmary was drowned in awkward silence.

“I’m going to return to the dorm now,” announced Todoroki, his legs readily motioned forward towards the door. If a hand hadn’t grabbed the back of his clothes, he’d have reached his goal. But sadly enough, Bakugou had other plans for him.

“That’s all? You’re not going to take responsibility for what you did to me?” asked Bakugou, a small frown mixing with a knowing smirk.

“You were the one who told me to leave as soon as I finished taking you to the infirmary,” pointed out Todoroki, an eyebrow slightly arched in puzzlement.

“Yeah, ‘changed my mind a bit,” said Bakugou as he shrugged his shoulders. He released Todoroki’s clothes and went to look for the mentioned extra jerseys inside of the unlocked cupboards. “You’d

probably be handier than any AC and for as long as you don't try to turn me into an explosive ice cube, I'd be able to keep my Quirk under control while sleeping. Which is the only time I can't accurately prevent the nitroglycerin from going kaboom and blow up with half of the world."

"Okay…?" acknowledged Todoroki, not really understanding where Bakugou wanted to get at with all of that.

"Get in the bed. I'm dying for some sleep," instructed Bakugou, quickly taking off the rest of his wet clothes and put on a pair of pants and jerseys, leaving the zipper open to not start overheating his body before he could get some actual sleep on him. "Why are you just standing there? Hurry it up, will ya?"

"Huh?" interjected Todoroki, caught completely off guard when Bakugou grabbed his arm and started dragging him towards the closest bed. Amidst so much confusion, he was easily pushed down on the bed.

"Lend me that cold right side of yours for a little while longer," said Bakugou, his smirk growing exponentially as he leaned over Todoroki's half sat down, half laid down body.

It was an instant KO. The moment Bakugou's head landed on top of Todoroki's right shoulder, with his torso and legs closely glued to the right side of his body, he blacked out immediately.

How exactly did I end up in a situation like this…? , sighed Todoroki in the back of his mind.

He momentarily thought about silently sneaking out of the bed - Bakugou seemed to be greatly relishing on his icy right side but he

couldn’t say the same for himself, now having to withstand his body heat, Bakugou’s body heat and the heatwave all at the same time, with the AC turned off and no open windows - but he quickly scratched off that idea.

Who would have thought Bakugou likes cuddling in bed?

Chapter 2

“Welcome back to the world of the living, Bakugou~!” greeted Kaminari, jokingly saluting the blonde as he stepped inside of the classroom halfway through lunch break.

“Are you feeling better now?” asked Kirishima, an ear-to-ear grin on his lips at seeing his friend back on his own two feet - literally.

“Who said I was feeling bad?” scoffed Bakugou with a ‘hmph!’ under his breath. Rather than go directly to his table or go meet with Kirishima and Kaminari, he went straight to Sero, his hand urging him to give something to him. “Gimme some tape.”

“Why?” asked Sero, starting to create a portion of tape from his left elbow nevertheless.

“Shall I tape your wrists and ankles now?” asked back Bakugou the moment he got the tape on his hand. He strongly stretched it right in front of Sero’s face, the tape making a whip-like cracking sound at it. A demon-like smirk remained on his face. “Your mouth too, while I’m at it”

“Ah… T-That was a slip of tongue…” nervously babbled Sero, steadily putting some distance between him and Bakugou as he kept growing closer and closer to his next victim. “A joke, maybe…? Ah, wait…!! I’m sorry! A-And I wasn’t the only one! Why aren’t you bitching at Kirishima!?”

“Leave my steed out of this,” growled Bakugou, stretching the tape once again as he motioned it closer and closer to Sero’s mouth. “He’ll be plenty of busy studying for the upcoming exams all on his own.”

“Nooo! Anything but that!!” whined Kirishima, falling to the ground and prostrating himself at Bakugou’s back to ask for some mercy. “We were in the wrong there! It was a bad joke! We’ll reflect on it and never do it again! So please don’t say you’re gonna give up on your steed!!!”

“Hah… Bakugou really has the two of you by the balls,” snorted Mineta, fearfully observing the show from inside of the safe, protective cage-like structure he had forced Shoji to do with his extra arms upon Bakugou’s arrival.

“Don’t worry, you’re next in line to be castrated,” reassured Bakugou, cracking his knuckles after he finished covering Sero’s mouth with the tape. He left Sero to fend off after himself and the tape and menacingly approached the hiding midget. “Heh, I’ll be especially *hands-on* with you.”

“GYAAAAAAAAAAHH!!!”

He sure switches gears fast, inwardly noted Todoroki, observing the semi-violent interactions between his classmates from the safety of the classroom’s entrance. *Half an hour ago he was wrapped around my right side like a baby koala, now he’s attempting to torture his classmates in broad daylight.*

That was something Todoroki never expected to think about Bakugou - the baby koala part, in particular. It clashed far too much with his usual ferocious beast-like persona. One expected Bakugou to bite anyone’s throat off if they so much as said the wrong thing in front of him, not for him to snuggle up to them because he felt too hot.

“Pfft!” Laughter crawled up all the way to his throat, which he tried to

keep hidden with the help of his hand. Part of him wondered what would be Kirishima, Kaminari, Sero and Mineta's reaction if they had seen Bakugou sleeping like a baby but he wasn't mean enough to send them to an early grave. He couldn't even guarantee that he himself wouldn't be sent to an early grave any moment now.

"Todoroki-kun, you're back already!" said Midoriya, returning from the cafeteria together with Iida and Uraraka. He couldn't help but cringe when he saw the slaughterhouse-like scene inside of their classroom. "And so is Kacchan…"

"Is Bakugou-kun feeling better now?" asked Uraraka, peeking at Todoroki before she returned her gaze at Mineta's final moments (or not, since Iida was already on his way to stop Bakugou from finishing the poor guy off).

"Yeah," answered Todoroki with a small nod of his head.

"Were you… looking after Kacchan all this time?" asked Midoriya this time, an eyebrow slightly arched in surprise. He glanced at Todoroki from his feet to the ends of his hair and found no wounds, no charred marks, which was plainly weird when he took into consideration who the looked after person was.

"Well, I guess you can put it that way," said Todoroki, not really knowing how he should answer. Halfway through waiting for Bakugou to wake up, he also ended up falling asleep. When he woke up, it was already well past the 2nd period. Luckily, Recovery Girl reassured him that she had given Aizawa a class exemption leave for him too so he stayed in the infirmary's bed dubbing as a body pillow until Bakugou woke up around noon.

"And you're okay…?" fearfully asked Midoriya, gulping down hard in dry. He couldn't even begin to imagine the unmeasurable amount of

cussing and hissing Todoroki must have gone through throughout the whole morning. He definitely didn't want to be in that role ever.

"I got plenty of sleep," replied Todoroki, throwing a thumbs-up at his visibly worried friend.

"That's all? Nothing… else?" suspiciously inquired Midoriya. The lack of anything was probably scarier than the most ridiculous of torturing methods Bakugou could come up with.

"What else would there be?" asked back Todoroki, tilting his head to the left.

"Well, I guess that's true. Ahh! Wait, Kacchan! You're going to break Mineta-kun at this rate!!" acknowledged Midoriya right before his voice switched to a panicky squeak.

Iida was no longer being able to keep the ferocious beast in check on his own.

-.-

"Shesh, it sure is hot…!" howled Ashido, using a magazine to fan her face and upper body. "The AC isn't quite cutting it anymore…"

"It's not that bad," said Asui, the only one leisurely enjoying the late evening in the communal living room. Amphibians thrived in hot weather and since her water supply was more than assured in the big city, she was in paradise at the moment. If there was only one problem was that she had too much energy to spare and no one around to match it, as the small group of zombie-like students all

around her came to prove.

“Does anyone want some iced tea...?” offered Yaoyorozu, carrying a tray with several glasses filled with tea, the ice cubes in them clattering against the hard surface with little clanks.

“Me…” sounded several sets of nearly dying voices. Most of them didn’t have enough energy to talk and simply raised one or two fingers in the air.

“This is getting a bit ridiculous, isn’t it…?” whined Kaminari, slowly pushing his body to a sitting position on the sofa so he could drink and relish on the fresh beverage. “Tonight’s even hotter than yesterday… It’s 10 PM and it’s 35 freaking Celsius degrees!!”

“You should be glad it’s no longer the same 43ºC of this afternoon…” pointed out Kirishima after having downed the iced tea in one go. He settled the empty glass on top of the table and dropped his body back to the sofa’s cushions. His voice trailed off as he mumbled, “What we shouldn’t be glad about is…”

“We’re going to wake up in the middle of the night with more explosions, aren’t we?” groaned Ashido, the silence around her hinting that everyone was thinking the same thing she was. “Argh, I don’t want to spend the whole night worrying about the possibility of getting buried under tons of debris…!!”

“The feeling is mutual,” barked back Bakugou, on his way to the elevators after having exited the bathing area, fresh - or as fresh as one can be at 35ºC - out of a long cold shower. A glare remained on his red eyes, pointed towards the zombie-like group as he waited for the elevator to get down. “Between sleeping and exploding with shit, I prefer sleeping. But you pests are starting to change my mind on it. Get off my case already, will you, fucking morons!?”

Ding!

“Oh, Kacchan. Are you going to bed now?” asked Midoriya as soon as he spotted Bakugou by the elevator’s entrance.

“Fuck off, Deku!!” roared Bakugou, menacingly glaring daggers at his childhood friend on his way inside of the elevator.

“O-Okay…! G-Good night…!!” squeaked Midoriya, protectively covering his face with his arms during the short seconds it took Bakugou to get inside of the elevator and depart from the ground floor. He sighed. “We’ve all been living under the same roof for a few months now but Kacchan is still as cranky with me as ever… I really have to wonder how you managed to- Eh? Todoroki-kun?”

Midoriya looked around, searching for the classmate that had also gone down the elevator at the same time as him, but he couldn’t find Todoroki anywhere in sight.

-.-

“Bakugou, this is considered kidnapping,” said Todoroki, his eyes blankly observing the numbers on the digital panel slowly climb to the 4th floor. The same hand that pulled him back inside of the elevator on the ground floor was still keeping hold of the back of his upper clothes.

“I prefer to call it a strategical retreat…” grumbled Bakugou under his breath, his mood getting even sourer at his own half-desperate actions. He clicked his tongue in annoyance. “Just shut up and come, okay? Then it won’t be a ‘kidnapping’ or some shit like that anymore!”

“I was on my way to get something fresh to drink… But do you need something from me?” asked Todoroki after a small sigh. By the looks of it, or he would go willingly with Bakugou or he would go unwillingly with him. No other option, no refreshing drink.

“Lend me your body again,” said Bakugou without any hesitation, without his facial expression changing from the usual serious demeanour. When the elevator’s door opened, he pushed Todoroki out and led him towards the usually vacant room on the 4th floor, now occupied by Bakugou until the repairs to his actual bedroom were finished.

“No,” answered Todoroki just as fast, despite not doing much to return to the elevator and get away from Bakugou’s possibly insane plan. Putting on the sidelines how misleading his words sounded, he couldn’t quite believe that Bakugou had just said something like that with a straight face *and* without blowing up with anything. *Is this what is called ‘desperate times call for desperate measures’?*

“What’s the harm? You did it this morning and I heard no complaints at the time,” pointed out Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. He unlocked his bedroom’s door and pushed Todoroki inside, locking it up again once the two of them were inside.

“I want to sleep just as much as you do,” countered Todoroki, evading Bakugou and returning to the door.

“You ain’t gonna get much sleep if I spend the whole night blowing up with shit,” scoffed Bakugou. “I sleep without sweating like a fuckin’ pig, you sleep without getting suddenly woken up by an explosion and no one in the dorm dies when the building gets blown up to hell. A freaking happy ending to everyone until this shitty weather goes away.”

…*Fair point,* inwardly acknowledged Todoroki, glancing over his shoulder at the impatiently waiting blonde.

For as much as pollution and the natural environmental changes had modified the world's climate, the heatwave had been going for five days now. It wouldn't last much longer than a week and a half, maybe two weeks at maximum. If dubbing as Bakugou's body pillow for a few days would prevent deaths, injuries and even further sleep deprivation on all residents of that dorm, then it definitely was the best solution to that particularly large threat on their livelihood.

"Is the AC in this bedroom working?" asked Todoroki, which gained him a small grunt of acknowledgement. He fully turned to face Bakugou and raised one of his hands, three of its fingers lifted. "I charge three plates of cold soba per night. Plus the ones you owe me for this morning."

"You…! Ugh…" roared Bakugou, doing his best to keep himself on check. After plenty of self-control and even more willpower to not punch and kick Todoroki black and blue for that one, he forced his mouth to voice out his unwilling agreement. "Fine! Geez! Opportunistic asshole! Shit… The things I have to do..."

He really must be desperate, noted Todoroki in the back of his mind, a small smile lightly tugging at the corner of his lips. No matter how much Bakugou complained and yapped about his classmates and every single student at U.A. High School, Todoroki had come to realise it was more empty threats and overly loud quick retorts than actual hate or dislike (maybe with the exception of Midoriya). If he truly didn't care about anyone except for his own ascension to pro hero, Bakugou wouldn't be subjecting himself to this kind of deal. He'd just explode with the dorm and everything else without a care and be done with it. *Maybe he cares more than he lets on. This is sort of…*

“Hey, hurry it up, Half-and-Half Opportunistic Asshole,” complained Bakugou, urging Todoroki to get on the bed at the same time he turned the AC on.

“Yeah, yeah,” sighed Todoroki, walking up to the bed like requested. He sat down there and looked up at Bakugou. “How do you… Ah, Bakugou?”

“Hm?” hummed Bakugou, his hands busy stripping his body down to his underwear only. He downed half of a water bottle and settled it on top of the nightstand next to the bed, turning off the lights right afterwards on his way to the bed. When he looked up, he found Todoroki staring at him with an eyebrow arched in wonder. “What now? I told you to hurry up, didn’t I? I want to sleep, preferably now.”

“Ah…” Before Todoroki could say anything, Bakugou grabbed the hem of his t-shirt and swiftly removed it from his torso as if undressing a newborn. The being pushed down on the bed and having a half-naked body closely nestled against his right side version 2.0 happened so fast all he heard was a mumbled ‘Good night, bastard’ before Bakugou fell asleep almost instantly. “...At least he’s consistent on his sleeping pattern…”

Opposite to what had happened on the infirmary, the AC was turned on nearly to the max so Todoroki couldn’t complain about being too stuffy and hot. If anything, it felt somewhat nice to have a warm body covering most of his coldest side.

“Oh, I didn’t finish the composition for Mic-sensei’s English class…” mumbled Todoroki to himself, suddenly recalling the final task of his day that he was to do after getting something cold to drink from the communal kitchen. There was no way he could do it now.

It was far too early for him to get sleepy so Todoroki found himself

thinking about several things. From mentally jotting down what he needed to do for the upcoming exams to noticing that he had never shared a bed with any of his siblings, his brain went full-throttle with thoughts and musings in the silent darkness, only Bakugou's spaced sighs and the soft buzzing of the AC reaching his ears.

"…" Slowly, Todoroki took a glance at his sleeping classmate. Bakugou moved around now and then, mainly to search for new cold portions of skin after seeping the previous ones all up. Even so, he had never seen Bakugou so calm and peaceful. Laughter once again started creeping up his throat as he motioned his left hand towards the blonde's sleeping face and gently cleaned the small dribble of saliva escaping from in between his lips. "He's even drooling…"

This is sort of cute.

Chapter 3

“Wake up. ...Hey. I said wake the fuck up!!!”

“UGH…!!” groaned Todoroki when the heel of a foot came crashing down on his naked stomach. His brain arose from sleep immediately with the violent wake-up call, his body reacting defensively by creating pointy ice pillars from the floor.

“Woah!” yelped Bakugou, dodging the icicles by a hairbreadth. What he couldn’t dodge was the small pool of half-frozen water melting from the ice pillars’ bases - Bakugou’s feet slipped on the water and he gloriously fell butt first on the floor. “Ow!”

“What are you doing?” asked Todoroki, rubbing his sore abdominal area with his hand while he used the other to prompt his back off of the mattress.

“That’s what I should be asking!!!!” roared Bakugou, equally rubbing his throbbing tailbone. “Shit! Just hurry up and get out of my bed! I wanna go have breakfast and no way in hell will I let you snooze away all alone in my room!”

“Oh, right,” mumbled Todoroki, only now remembering he had spent the night in Bakugou’s temporary bedroom due to their body pillow-cold soba exchange. He got out of the bed and grabbed his t-shirt, all creased and wrinkled after being left on the floor all night. He put it on nevertheless as they exited the bedroom. “You could have woken me up a little bit more gently.”

“Yeah, right,” scoffed Bakugou, rolling his eyes around. “Breakfast on the bed too, while we’re at it? Fuck off! I only need your body during the night. Once that’s over, you’re out.”

“I’m considering charging extra every time you wake me up like that,” warned Todoroki, staring at Bakugou with a nearly expressionless face. He wanted the free cold soba, not bruises all over his body - and a deal was a deal, whether it was for the greater good of the dorm or because this whole situation was becoming more entertaining than he had initially thought possible. He sadly rubbed his stomach, faking bigger discomfort than he actually felt as they waited for the elevator to get to the 4th floor. “That really hurt, Bakugou…”

“If you had woken up when I first called you, I wouldn’t have kicked you!!” yelled Bakugou, accusingly pointing his index finger at Todoroki. “Besides, I’m pretty sure I hit the floor harder than my foot hit your weakling stomach! Shit, I think you just broke my ass!”

“And then All Might… just… went……....” babbled Midoriya into a silence as the elevator stopped, the doors opened and the booming voice of his childhood friend reached his ears. “...What?”

“What are you looking at, Shitty Nerd!?” hissed Bakugou, making his way inside of the elevator and bumping on Midoriya’s shoulder on the process. He resembled more a thug than a student on a hero course as he leaned over the corner of the elevator and silently waited for it to start the descent.

“S-Sorry…” half-heartedly apologised Midoriya. He and Tokoyami were both far too busy gawking at Todoroki’s unusual presence on the 4th floor so early in the morning to conjure more than that single-word sentence. Luckily, Todoroki broke the ice for them, even if not for very long.

“Good morning, Midoriya, Tokoyami,” greeted Todoroki, offering a small nod with his head. After he stepped inside the elevator, he pressed the button for the 5th floor. Though Bakugou was all dressed up and ready for breakfast and then school, he still had yet to change

out of the casual clothes he had been wearing the previous night.

“Yeah…” mumbled Tokoyami, looking at the floor since he didn’t know where exactly he should keep his eyes on.

“Good morning… Todoroki-kun…” greeted back Midoriya, gulping down hard and shutting up for the rest of the insanely awkward elevator ride to the 5th floor and then all the way down to the ground floor.

-.-

Something’s wrong here…, mumbled Midoriya in the back of his head, his ear listening to the teacher’s class but his brain far too busy spiralling around with thoughts. *I don’t know what it is but there’s definitely something wrong here. Something’s wrong. I know it is but where…? Where is that something?*

“Midoriya, you mumble one more time and you’re getting detention,” warned Aizawa, noisily closing the textbook on his hands to make his already very noticeable annoyance clear. He heard his student stifle a yelp with his hands and, after one last glance at him, proceeded with the ending of his class. “I know you must all be more tired than usual due to the heatwave and want to use your weekend to take it easy and recover from all the missed sleeping hours. However, there’ll be a foreign hero exhibition in Shinjuku. As one of the sponsors, Principal Nezu has made it so that all U.A. students can go in free of charge. It’s not a compulsive field trip, it’s just a tidbit of information that the principal wants the teachers to relay to their students in case they’re interested in it. If you feel like going despite the extreme weather conditions, be sure to look after yourselves. Keep hydrated at all times, don’t stand on the sun for long periods of time and use sunblock. Keep an eye out for villains too, as special events like these always earn all types of unsavoury attention. That’s all, you’re dismissed for the day.”

“Haa… The week is finally over~” cheerfully said Kaminari, sluggishly stretching his arms over his head once their teacher exited the classroom. “Time to go back to the dorm and start binging on them ice creams!”

“Don’t binge ice cream only or you’ll become even more stupid,” sighed Jirou, shaking her head in disapproval. “It would stop being funny whenever you fry your brains and turn into a pitiful show…”

“Geez, no mercy there today, huh, Jirou-sama?” mumbled Kaminari under his breath, dropping his arms to the sides of his seat in utter defeat.

“The hero exhibition sounds extremely interesting. What do you think, Midoriya, Uraraka?” said Iida, walking together with Uraraka to near Midoriya’s desk. “Do you want to go this Saturday?”

“I am definitely up to go during the two days, to be honest,” acknowledged Midoriya, excitedly nodding his head at the proposal. “Actually, I was already planning on going since they first announced it back at the beginning of the year. I wasn’t counting on it having free admission for U.A. students though.”

“I figured as much,” laughed Uraraka, also giving a thumbs up at the weekend outing. She turned her back to her two friends and addressed the rest of her classmates. “Is there anyone else who’d like to come with us to the hero exhibition?”

“I want to go too,” said Todoroki, finishing putting his school books back inside his bag before he grouped up with his classmates.

“I’m totally down for it!!” announced Kirishima, also joining in the forming small group for the weekend outing. He leaned his body sideways and extended his invitation to yet another classmate. “What about you, Bakugou?”

“Heh… Hehehehe…” eerily laughed Bakugou, his eyes absentmindedly staring down at his desk. Sweat dribbled down from his forehead but that location was the least of everyone’s concerns. What truly set off the sirens inside of Kirishima and company’s minds was his hands. The hands dripping sweat and nitroglycerin as if a wet cloth. The nitroglycerin-charged sweat dripping, drop by drop, into an empty plastic bottle, which he had been drinking water from throughout their classes. Correction: the half-full plastic bottle. “You’re picking a fight with me, ain’t ya? I won’t hold back then… I’m gonna blow up with you real nice, sun. I’ll make sure you regret messin’ with me! Get ready because I’m about to send you a lil’ present and blow up with you for good, motherfucker!!!”

Bakugou has gone completely bonkers!!!!, inwardly screeched Class 1-A at the same time. Some started hiding behind their desks, others moved into action to prevent the ticking bomb from going off - whichever of the two was the most terrifying.

“Todoroki-kun, create some ice to start freshening Kacchan up!!” instructed Midoriya, readily charging forward and snatching the plastic bottle out of Bakugou’s hands, as carefully and delicately as his still half-baked shooting style allowed him to.

“I’m not about to do the same mistake of last time,” said Todoroki as he cut the distance between himself and Bakugou to a zero - a quite literal zero, to everyone’s surprise. He swept his right arm underneath Bakugou’s arms and pulled him up from his seat, pushing his sweaty face against the right side of his neck with his other hand. A quite cheap substitute for the nighttime body pillow, if he so said himself, but it should make do as a quick fix. “Bakugou, even if you find a way to send that bottle to space, it will blow up way before it reaches anywhere near the sun.”

He… He's going to be killed!!!! , inwardly screeched Class 1-A once again, horrified expressions all over the classroom. Kouda even covered his eyes with his hands to avoid witnessing the murder scene.

"I fucking know that!!" barked back Bakugou, his body shock-still against Todoroki's refreshing right side. "Do you think I'm stupid or something!? I was trying to keep the nitroglycerin from getting all over the place like it happened in the bathing area!!"

"Oh. Yeah, that makes sense," noted Todoroki, nodding his head in understanding as he did so. He tightened his arm around Bakugou's chest and slowly started dragging him outside of the classroom. "Do you have ethanol or acetone on you?"

"Why would I walk around the school with them in my bag?" groaned Bakugou, rolling his eyes around in annoyance. "I just get some from the chemistry lab whenever I need them."

"To the chemistry lab then," sighed Todoroki, resigning himself to the fate of having to once again drag Bakugou around the school. "Midoriya, be careful getting rid of that plastic bottle."

"Y-Yeah… I… Ah… I will…" acknowledged Midoriya, his flabbergasted expression as he observed the two of them leaving the classroom making it hard for him to formulate a perfectly coherent speech pattern.

Nope, none of this makes ANY sense!! , inwardly screeched Class 1-A, now turning ghostly pale at Bakugou's lack of reaction. They all mutually thought it had been a mirage caused by the heatwave… but the plastic bottle left in Midoriya's hand was far too solid to not be real.

“Shit, this is so annoying…” grumbled Bakugou under his breath, doing his best to keep himself as motionless as possible while being dragged through the large corridor. He could walk just fine but it would be a nearly impossible task to accomplish given the current position of their bodies. “Fuck the heatwave…! Fuck the lack of proper air circulation inside of classrooms!”

“I only need your body during the night…” recalled Todoroki, glancing down to the top of Bakugou’s head. He took a glance at his surroundings, trying to locate their current location and elaborate the fastest and coldest way to get to the chemistry lab without any accidents. He then glanced down at Bakugou once again. “Wasn’t that what you told me this morning?”

“S-Shut up!” roared Bakugou at the top of his lungs. He then quietened completely… only to finally mumble, “...just make it 5 plates of cold soba a day in total…”

“I want some of them to be green tea soba.”

“You’re starting to push it too far, Half-and-Half Opportunistic Asshole!!!!”

Chapter 4

“I want to leave something perfectly clear here,” grumbled Bakugou, his voice aggressively whispering at Todoroki after having pulled him aside in the living room area. “I’m only going with you dumbasses because I prefer tolerating you for a whole fuckin’ day than to be billed for property damages. Understood?”

“Yeah,” acknowledged Todoroki in a non-committal way.

“And never, ever forget!” added Bakugou, leaning his face closer to Todoroki’s. “You’re not going because of the hero exhibition, you’re going because you'll be the safety pin preventing me from blowing up with half of Shinjuku. Your number one priority is and will always be me. Got it?”

“Your egocentric personality never ceases to amaze me,” deadpanned Todoroki, inwardly rolling his eyes around at Bakugou’s bold demands.

“I’m just worth that much,” claimed Bakugou, a smug smirk tugging at the corner of his lips. “And as the customer paying 5 plates of soba per day, I demand to have the provided service to be equivalent to the payment. Or I might just feel like food poisoning you once the heatwave ends!”

With that final bark, Bakugou turned around on his heels and went back to the small group waiting by the sofas, leaving Todoroki to tiredly sigh all on his own.

"Are you sure you should go to the hero exhibition, Bakugou?" inquired Kirishima, a slightly worried semblance on his face. "You have been going insane just by being inside the school building or the

dorm. Will the world be able to survive with you venturing outside with these infernal temperatures?"

"Like hell this heatwave is gonna stop me from going wherever I want to go," snorted Bakugou, dropping his body on the empty space in the sofa between Kirishima and Kaminari, who had also decided to go with his classmates to the exhibition. "And why are we still here? Are we going or not?"

"We're just waiting for Uraraka and Tsuyu-chan," informed Iida, his eyes stuck to the railway map as he tried to decide on the quickest and safest way for them to get to Shinjuku without running the risk of Bakugou being labelled as a terrorist. "We'll leave as soon as they get here."

"Oh, speaking of the devil!" said Kaminari as soon as the elevator's chime resounded and the doors opened to reveal two rushing students.

"Sorry for the wait, guys!" apologised Uraraka, running with Asui towards the group as fast as they could. "We got a bit busy with stuff…"

"Sorry," also apologised Asui, adjusting the strap of her heavy-looking fabric carrier bag on her shoulder. "I completely forgot to get my water ready last night…"

"It’s a woman's prerogative to make men wait so no need to apologise," said Kirishima, throwing a thumbs-up at his classmates to reassure them that all the men there would have waited for as long as they needed - except one.

"Finally!" groaned Bakugou, immediately getting up from the sofa. He

started walking towards the dorm's front door, not waiting a single second to see if everyone in the group was truly ready to depart. "Hurry it up already, you slowpokes! Don't make me regret doing something as stupid as this already!"

"Bakugou-kun is already in a bad mood?" sighed Asui, following after the grumpy blonde together with the rest of the group.

"Kacchan probably just wants to avoid being outside during the hotter hours of the day," explained Midoriya, awkwardly smiling at Asui. "It's not because of you, Asu- I mean, Tsuyu-chan."

"I agree with him on that one," pointed out Todoroki, paying close attention to Bakugou as they ventured into the humid outside and the 10 AM heat started burning into their eyes and skin. "I pity anyone who’s going to share the same train carriage as him."

"We're also going to share the same train carriage as him," said Kaminari, not getting what Todoroki was trying to get at.

"My point exactly," deadpanned Todoroki, inwardly releasing a tired sigh. His Quirk was ice and fire but he could already accurately predict what was about to happen throughout the train ride to Shinjuku. And despite not having interacted much with others before being accepted at U.A. High School, even he knew it was frowned upon to be loud inside the trains, not to mention completely jaw-dropping to see a man sticking to another like his life depended on it. Bakugou was about to be stuck between a rock and a hard place and he was pretty sure Bakugou was also aware of that. He sighed again, this time outwardly. "It truly is a pity."

"Oh…" interjected the rest of the group - except for Iida -, almost as if they had only now realised the initial predicament they'd have to conquer in order to reach the hero exhibition's site.

"There's no way we could afford a taxi ride until there… right?" hesitantly inquired Midoriya, gulping down hard in dry. "Do you think… the AC inside the train will be enough?"

"..."

"Time to hurry, guys!!" announced Kaminari, his squeaky voice urging everyone to break into a run to catch up with the grumbling and cussing blonde and urge him into moving even faster too.

I sure hope there's not a lot of people wanting to ride the train today , inwardly requested Todoroki as he ran through the school's open gate. *But at the same time, wouldn't it be interesting to see how Bakugou would react to it?*

By hoping for something but wanting to experience the opposite, Todoroki inadvertently set off the flag to their demise - one that he ended up enjoying until the very end.

-.-

"What the fuck is this…?" mumbled Bakugou, his jaw nearly dropping to the floor at the sight before him. "You've got to be freaking kidding me… What the hell is this!? Hey, Deku!!!"

"Why are you looking at me as if this is my fault!?" yelped Midoriya, just as shocked at the train station's packed ticked gates as Bakugou was. He frenetically looked around the station, trying to figure out if some sort of accident happened to justify the hundreds of people passing by them. "Was it an accident on the roads? Or do you think there’s some sort of event today? Apart from the hero exhibition, of

course."

"Deku-kun… Look…" said Uraraka with a slightly trembly voice. She was pointing at one of the nearby walls, covered with several different event posters from one end to the other - unfortunately, the dates featured in them all had a certain weekend in common. This weekend. "I think… we're doomed."

"Don't say that…" sobbed Kaminari, wiping the drops of sweat dribbling down his temple with the back of his hand. "Whenever a character in a manga says that, something even worse always happens…"

Ding dong ding dang

"Dear passengers, once again, we'd like to offer our apologies for the lack of air conditioning inside of the short-distance trains. We are doing our best to fix the electronic malfunctioning as fast as possible. Hence, for the foreseeable connections within Tokyo, we advise caution while riding the trains. Thank you for your understanding. We wish you a good journey."

"Aha… Ahahaha… That announcement just now… was just a mirage caused by the sun, right?" asked Kaminari, awkwardly laughing his worries away. "It was, wasn't it? Sniff… Please tell me it was…"

"I heard it too so I guess it wasn't," said Todoroki, completely ruining Kaminari's hopeful dreams. He turned slightly to the left and opened his mouth to speak once again, but an arm to his neck nearly choked him into breathlessness. "Baku-"

"Bathroom break," suddenly announced Bakugou, grabbing Todoroki by the neck and dragging him away deeper into the crowd.

"Are you a pair of girls or something…?" sighed Kirishima, scratching the back of his head as they observed their classmates disappear in a sea of people.

"Bakugou. Bakugou, time out…" requested Todoroki, repeatedly tapping on Bakugou's arm as a warning. The air was already stuffy and humid enough as it was, he didn't need Bakugou making it even harder to breath. "Bakugou!"

"I know, damn it!" barked Bakugou, snatching his arm out of Todoroki's neck to give him one final push inside of the train station's public bathroom. With a half-desperate groan, he dragged Todoroki to the closest empty stall and locked themselves in. It went without saying that he glued himself to Todoroki's right arm instantly, so fast his movements could have won against Bolt's top speed. "Argh, shit… Are you fucking for real!? Who cares about the no delays award, I want a fucking AC during a fucking heatwave! Is that asking for too much, fucking railways!?"

"Bakugou, maybe you should go back to the dorm," said Todoroki, activating his icy Quirk the bare minimum to make his right side a bit colder than his usual body temperature. "Everything that could go wrong has gone wrong. Even you can't go against Murphy's Law."

"The fuck I can't!" roared Bakugou, hugging Todoroki's arm even more strongly, as if the perfect replacement for some poor railway maintenance worker's neck. "I'm definitely not going back! I'm gonna go to that hero exhibition even if that's the last thing I do, god damn it!!"

"Or the last thing someone does…" sighed Todoroki, facing the raging blonde's stubbornness head-on. "At least go to the exhibition's site by taxi."

"Do I really need to be scared shitless of a train when I have the student with the most internship requests working as my slave?" scoffed Bakugou, rolling his eyes around at Todoroki's suggestion. With a small sigh of relief, he lightly leaned the side of his head over Todoroki's shoulder. "Fail me now and I'm withholding all of the soba until graduation day!"

"Okay, okay. I get it," said Todoroki, using his free hand to half hide his face. What was that just now? Was Bakugou depending on him? The prideful Bakugou that preferred to lose than to cooperate with Midoriya? The haughty sports festival's winner that kicked a fuss because he didn't win *win* against him? *This is far too cute.* "I'll do my best to keep you from blowing up with the train."

"Of course you will!" smugly acknowledged Bakugou, not a hint of doubt on his voice as he made those claims. But after a couple of seconds in deep silence, he realised something - what the heck was he saying and doing inside a bathroom stall of a train station? He pushed Todoroki way from him as if he had been the one clinging to him and burst the stall's door open. "Okay, let's go!"

"Don't forget to wash your-"

"I know that!!" roared Bakugou, throwing a dirty glare at Todoroki through the mirror as he furiously, but meticulously, washed the sweat out of his hands. "Do you think my Quirk appeared yesterday like the Shitty Nerd's!?"

Rather than biting into Bakugou's arguing, Todoroki tranquilly waited for him to get ready to dive back to the crowd, possibly to turn into a sardine in a tin right afterwards. They weren't that far away from Shinjuku so they'd be able to arrive at the target train station after a 15-20 minutes ride. All he had to do was prevent Bakugou's hands from getting dangerously explosive within that time limit.

He can't hold onto me while inside of the train, no matter how packed it might be, noted Todoroki in the back of his mind. He silently followed Bakugou as they rejoined the group, kept on silently pass through the ticket gates and to the platform. Even as the speakers announced the arrival of the train, Todoroki still mulled over a certain question. *How can I keep him from overheating? Or his hands, at least?*

"Kacchan, if you think you're going to explode, tell us right away, okay?" advised Midoriya, keeping his arms as close to his body as possible as he squeezed inside of the train carriage alongside dozens of other commuters. "It's better to make four or five stops at other stations than to be blown up."

"It's better to have you shut up right now than to listen to you screaming your lungs out while I hang you outside of the window!" growled Bakugou in tandem, a vein nearly popping out of his forehead at the sound of his childhood friend's concern. "Or better yet, why don't you get off on the next station and go play 'hide and go fuck yourself'?"

"Bakugou!" admonished Kirishima, throwing apologetical glances at the few people who heard the blasphemies slipping out of Bakugou's mouth. "We're all worried about you. Give Midoriya some slack here. At least for today, okay?"

"Whatever," dismissed Bakugou, softly clicking his tongue in annoyance. Out of the blue, he dropped his gaze downwards, just as Kaminari stepped in the conversation. "Huh?"

"Don't 'whatever' us! This is a serious matter!" added Kaminari, fighting to squeeze in between two other passengers to be more easily heard by his two classmates. "No, this is a matter of life or death! Just take a deep breath, relax and try to keep both mind and body cool. If the worst-case scenario is about to happen, I'll personally make sure

that Midoriya is kicked out of the train so ignore him. Hey, Bakugou, I said ignore Midoriya, not ignore me!”

“...” Bakugou looked from the extra hand holding his two hands to the person standing next to him. Todoroki couldn’t have been paying less attention to him as he chatted away with Midoriya and Iida. He snorted, a smile lingering on his lips for a couple of seconds. “Whatever.”

“It’s not whatever!” yelped Kaminari with a reduced voice, not aware that he hadn’t been the source for that the second reply.

“Gero?” Asui tilted her head to the right, accidentally hitting Uraraka’s arm as she did so.

“What’s up, Tsuyu-chan?” inquired Uraraka, her concern spurred by the fact Asui had an extremely pensive expression on her face. “Is something wrong?”

“No, it’s nothing,” reassured Asui, smiling at her friend. *I’ll just pretend I didn’t see anything.*

Chapter 5

“We’ve finally... reached Shinjuku Bunka Center…” groaned Midoriya, supporting his body against a street lamp as he tried to catch his breath. He cleaned the sweat accumulating on his brows and released a tired sigh. “I sure hope the AC is at full blast inside…”

“I wish I could disagree with you…” mumbled Bakugou, too sapped out of energy to come up with some sort of bitting retort. He used the small pause everyone was taking before they went inside of the hero exhibition to get his hands all nice and safe. He took a bottle from his bag and readily dumped half of it on one of his hands, doing the same with the rest on the other one. “Oh, that’s much better.”

“Is that… acetone?” inquired Uraraka, recognising the characteristic scent of the product usually associated with nail polish remover.

“Yeah, mixed in equal portions of water and ethanol,” explained Bakugou, waving his hands around to remove the excess liquid and sweat before he wiped them completely with a handkerchief. A mischievous - or outright evil, for all onlookers - smirk slowly started creeping into his lips. “Remove the water from the mix and the sun would be charged with mass murder… Hehehe…”

“Shit, he’s starting to go into explosive-mode once again!” yelped Kirishima, getting up from the bench he had sat down at for a breather with a single motion. He grabbed Bakugou from behind by the shoulders and started pushing him towards the exhibition’s site. “C’mon, let’s get you where it’s nice and fresh!”

“I’ll go ahead and get us the free entry passes!” said Iida, readily zooming away towards the building’s entrance.

“I can get there on my own, I don’t need a guide for it!” grumbled Bakugou, shooing Kirishima’s hands away from his shoulders. He clicked his tongue in annoyance. “Nice move, indeed, you idiot. Getting all chummy and sticking to someone who’s trying to not sweat nitroglycerin is what I call ‘suicide’, you moron!”

I guess that only applies to those you don’t consider your temperature regulator body pillow, inwardly deadpanned Todoroki, recalling all of the instances where Bakugou was the one getting chummy and sticking to him. He continued following Bakugou with his eyes as he walked together with Kirishima and Kaminari, all three of them occupied with their usual friendly banter and bickering. *But if the anti-explosion cocktail works, my job is done for the time being.*

The small group successfully got inside of Shinjuku Bunka Center after showing their student IDs at the ticket area, each one of them receiving a free entry pass that allowed them to access both the exhibition on the basement floor and all conferences and debates on the upper ones.

They visibly separated into two cliques from there onwards. The main reason was obviously to keep Bakugou and Midoriya very far away from one another, due to their extremely volatile relationship. But also out of habit. It was a daily occurrence to see Kirishima and Kaminari gathering around Bakugou inside of the classroom or for studying sessions, just as much as it was common for Midoriya, Todoroki, Iida and Uraraka to eat together at the canteen every lunch break. Uraraka and Asui were also close friends so Asui fitted in the group almost as if she had always been a part of it.

This caused a physical barrier between Todoroki and Bakugou. They were still relatively close by to one another, as the two subgroups were casually waltzing around the exhibition room. So at the smallest of explosive problems, Bakugou could just drag him away like he had done up until now. Todoroki’s actual concern was… would he really do it?

Everyone was aware of Bakugou's prideful personality. He had been depending on Todoroki to cool him down but he had also noticed that Bakugou only forced himself to ask for help whenever he was nearly blowing his top - in the most literal of senses. It was quick fixes and stopgaps to delay the countdown for short instances the rest of the time.

That led Todoroki into wondering. How had Bakugou kept the nitroglycerin-infused sweat under control during previous heatwaves? Did he also have to take such precautions throughout the summer season? If nitroglycerin became unstable starting at 13ºC, how did he manage to have such a good and precise control on his explosions all the time? Was extra layers of fabric on his hero suit all it took for him to be able to produce sweat during the winter months? Wouldn't a regular winter coat end up causing the same effect too?

Todoroki was curious. He was *really* curious.

Maybe I should check his condition now and then, concluded Todoroki in the back of his mind. He glanced at the other side of the exhibition room, where Bakugou and Kirishima were seemingly listening Kaminari comparing himself to the life-size wax figure of a foreign hero.

Midoriya was jotting down notes on his notebook with a concentration of steel, Iida was attentively listening to the short documentary featured on a screen, and Uraraka and Asui were talking about the real-size wax figure of a female hero too so Todoroki deemed it was the perfect time to slip away for a couple of minutes and go see how Bakugou was faring.

"No, no, no. No matter how you look at it, Crimson Riot is a hundred times more manly than this dude here," proudly declared Kirishima, whipping his cellphone out of his pants' pocket to show the pro hero serving as his screen protector. "Look at this! Isn't this the manliest man you've ever seen in your life?"

“Maybe for Japanese standards, yeah, but in the West, this dude definitely takes the cake,” said Kaminari, slapping his hand on the wax figure’s bulging pecs. “He caught that bigass American villain in one week! That’s an All Might-category victory!!”

“Even so, Crimson Riot is the epitome of manliness!” insisted Kirishima, his features starting to twist into a frown. “Defeating and catching villains has nothing to do with levels of manliness!”

Argh, I’m so done with these two, groaned Bakugou, grinding his teeth in anger as he turned around on his heels and started walking away from the arguing duo. As he began going through the rest of the exhibition on his own, he bumped into yet another annoying situation. “What the heck are you doing?”

“I’m just checking on you,” said Todoroki, only his face visible on the oval hole in the large cardboard cutout of a well-known hero league, meant for visitors to take photos as their favourite superhero. His face clearly wasn’t a match for the hero he decided to pose as. “Did soaking your hands with that chemical mixture help?”

“Hah! As if,” scoffed Bakugou, glancing down at his hands. “I won’t be exploding with anything any time soon but that doesn’t change the fact I feel like shit because of this hellish weather. At least the AC works just fine here.”

“Bathroom break?” suggested Todoroki, getting out of behind of the cardboard cutout and pointing with his thumb to the bathroom on their left.

“…” Bakugou kept silently staring at Todoroki for a few seconds, later glancing over his shoulder to Kirishima and Kaminari. Just seeing

those two idiots still arguing with one another filled him with unexplainable annoyance. “Yeah, let’s do that before I murder someone.”

“You should probably try to phrase that differently,” advised Todoroki with a sigh, walking side by side Bakugou to the male bathroom. “You’ll make Kaminari cry.”

“Sometimes I wish I could make him cry harder,” grumbled Bakugou under his breath, lightly kicking the closest stall’s door wide open. “He’s not that much of a weakling though.”

Kaminari would probably be over the moon if he heard you say that, though slightly conflicted over the cry harder bit, inwardly snorted Todoroki, also getting inside of the bathroom stall. He locked the door with his left hand while casually offering his right arm to Bakugou. “Go right ahead.”

Bakugou unconsciously let a sigh slip past his lips as he wrapped his arms around Todoroki’s right arm and leaned himself on his shoulder. It truly felt the best like that, second only to not having a heatwave messing up with his life.

“Bakugou, what did you do during previous heatwaves?” asked Todoroki after a prolonged stretch of silence.

“Hm? The same as now,” said Bakugou, shifting his body around just the slightest to be easier to talk while leaning over Todoroki’s shoulder. “Avoid going outside during the hotter hours, stay inside with the AC at full blast, eat a shit load of cold food and drink a ton of water, carry around acetone or ethanol wherever I went and wash my hands to the point my skin started to crack. Aizawa-sensei said those no longer work as well as before because my hands got used to producing bucket loads of nitroglycerin during the summer camp’s

Quirk strengthening exercises so I guess I lucked out by having a portable ice cube at my beck and call around me the whole day."

"That must be hard," said Todoroki, ignoring the 'portable ice cube at his beck and call' statement. He felt a sudden impulse to lightly ruffle the blonde hair popping out in the corner of his eyes but the last thing he wanted was to have Bakugou lashing out on him so he ignored it likewise.

"Hmph. For as long as it doesn't kill you, anyone can get used to the shittiest of shits," scoffed Bakugou, lifting his chin from Todoroki's shoulder. He slowly released his arm too and proceeded into stretching his body slightly, as much as the small bathroom stall allowed him to. "Okay, let's get go-"

Without any warning, the floor, the walls, the ceiling started shaking violently, forcing both of them to support themselves against the stall's feeble walls. Just as suddenly as the earthquake began, the building stopped tethering around in a matter of short seconds, leaving no apparent proof behind of it having ever happened.

"That was a strong one," calmly noted Todoroki, far too used to earthquakes to let the recurrent natural event faze him more than needed.

"Nah, only little brats would get spooked with that one," laughed off Bakugou, dismissing the topic with a shrug of his shoulders. He unlocked the stall's door and stepped outside, his body diving into a completely unrecognisable bathroom. "What the fuck is this?"

What used to be a regular public male bathroom, featuring bathroom stalls for more private businesses, a couple of urinals and washing basins, was now a long corridor with no visible beginning or ending, a solemn bathroom stall from which they stepped out of on one side and

a mirror just as long as the endless corridor on the other.

“A villain attack?” asked Todoroki, a frown creasing his brows as he readied himself to fight.

“A bit too quiet for a villain attack, no?” pointed out Bakugou, carefully looking around their surroundings and finding to threatening presence or any indices whatsoever of one somewhere else. He took his cellphone from his pocket and readily dialled one of the few numbers in his call register. “Hey, Kirishima. What the fuck is going on? ...What do you mean, you don’t know!? ...Yeah. ...Yeah, same. ...No, I’m stuck in the bathroom with Todoroki. ...Fuck off! And you? ...How the heck did you end up getting separated from Dunce Face when you two were going at it as if two freakin’ teenage girls arguing which clothes brand is the best one!? ...Yeah. ...Okay, later.”

“I’m surprised we’re able to do phone calls in here,” noted Todoroki, also taking his cell phone out and checking the signal. It truly was as operative as it usually was while inside of a building, basement area or not. “What did Kirishima say?”

“There was an earthquake and then the whole exhibition room started changing all of a sudden,” said Bakugou after an annoyed clicking of his tongue. “He got separated from Kaminari when that happened but it seems he’s stuck in the same room as three other visitors. He said he was going to try to call him now.”

“I’ll try calling Midoriya and the others then. Maybe they were lucky and didn’t get caught up in this,” said Todoroki, following the same route as Bakugou had. After a few rings, the phone call smoothly connected. “Midoriya, did you also feel an earthquake a few minutes ago? ...Yes. ...Yeah and you? ...No, I’m inside of the bathroom with Bakugou. ...Okay.”

“So?” asked Bakugou, impatiently waiting for Todoroki to start telling him things. “What did the shitty nerd say?”

“The same thing also happened to them,” explained Todoroki. “But they didn’t get separated and, just like Kirishima, they’re together with some other visitors. Midoriya said he’s going to call Aizawa-sensei to try to figure out what’s happening. He’ll call us again after that.”

“Great! This day couldn’t get any worse!” loudly yelled Bakugou. He furiously kicked the stall’s wall, creating a large crack on its surface, and then leaned his back on it, the frown on his face and glare on his red eyes more than proof enough that he was royally pissed at that moment.

They waited and waited and waited, be it for their cellphones to ring once again, be it for the bathroom to return to normal. Only one of the two happened, however.

“Hello? ...Okay,” said Todoroki as soon as he picked up his ringing cellphone. He switched it to speaker mode and left the device between him and Bakugou. “You can start, Midoriya.”

“Okay. From what Aizawa-sensei said, there was indeed an attack to Shinjuku Bunka Center,” started explaining Midoriya right away. *“It can’t really be called a villain attack though. It was just an anti-foreigners extremist who used his Quirk as an attempt to force the organisers to cancel the hero exhibition.”*

“If they already know who the motherfucker is, then he sure did a shitty job at it,” snorted Bakugou. “And? How long do we need to wait until the building, or whatever this stupid shit is, goes back to normal?”

“Ah… Well…” said Midoriya with blatant hesitation. *“About that…”*

“Out with it, Deku!” roared Bakugou, snatching Todoroki’s phone from his hand to yell even more closely at the device. “NOW!!”

“T-The extremist’s Quirk is to physically modify the structure of any building he touches into a dungeon-like structure,” nervously explained Midoriya. *“Um, you know, like the dungeons in adventure games and such? His Quirk lasts up until 48 hours… or until everyone manages to escape the dungeon. So all you need to do is stay where you are for the rest of the weekend or-”*

“Time to slay some fuckin’ dungeons!” announced Bakugou, throwing the cellphone away to get his hands ready to welcome some action (luckily, Todoroki managed to catch his phone before it reached the floor). “Room number one, here I go!”

“I knew he’d say that…” sighed Midoriya. *“Todoroki-kun… sorry but I’m counting on you to keep Kacchan out of even bigger trouble.”*

“Yeah, I’ll try,” said Todoroki, releasing a small sigh as he ended the call. With a short run, he caught up with Bakugou as he went off on his own. “Do you have some sort of plan, Bakugou?”

“What plan could there be other than reaching the last room and get the hell out of here?” pointed out Bakugou, an excited smirk on his lips as he cracked his fingers. “I have no idea which floor this bathroom is supposed to be but it shouldn’t take us more than a couple of hours to rub on Deku’s face that we’re out.”

Right. Of course that’s what’s spurring him on, inwardly sighed Todoroki.

He knew Bakugou was mildly conscient of his actions so for as long as he didn't get too heated up or annoyed, he'd probably proceed with a certain amount of caution and wouldn't get them into an even worse situation. That's what Todoroki hoped for, at least.

However, even without an active source of annoyance around them, Bakugou's fuse started running thin in a matter of minutes.

"Shit, there's nothing in here!!" roared Bakugou, stomping his feet on the floor as he came to a stop. Although they were significantly farther away from the bathroom stall, the endless corridor was, to put it bluntly, just as endless as it was further back. "How the hell are we supposed to get out of here!? There's no door, no windows, no nothing! Just the fucking stall that led us here and this big ass mirror!"

"That's why I asked you if you had any plan," said Todoroki, glancing back in the direction they had come from. "Walking around without a proper location in mind won't take us anywhere. We'll just tire ourselves out for nothing."

Todoroki could almost hear a low growl coming from Bakugou's throat as they officially set camp at that spot and began analysing this 'dungeon room' to the smallest of details - which weren't many. Much like Bakugou had said, there was just the bathroom stall they had used and the large mirror inside of the insanely long corridor-like area. It didn't seem to have any start or end, it just stretched infinitely as far as their eyes could see.

"Oh," suddenly interjected Bakugou, his angry frown fading a little bit as his body jerked into motion once again. After a short laugh, he gave some balance to his fist and slammed his explosive punch straight in the mirror. "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's about to get fucked up right about now!?"

The whole endless mirror shattered into small smithereens and disintegrated before Todoroki couldn't advise Bakugou otherwise. Fortunately, Bakugou's fist was met with empty space behind it rather than a wall.

"Yeah, thought as much," acknowledged Bakugou, smugly smirking at the empty, black space that stretched forward, seemingly endlessly too. "I got this whole dungeon thing figured out already."

"I really need to ask. What exactly led you into thinking that punching the mirror would be a good idea?" sighed Todoroki, relieved that Bakugou's rashness didn't end up in injuries for neither of the two.

"Don't ghosts and shit like that always use mirrors to come out to the character's world in movies and games?" pointed out Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders.

"..." Bakugou's expression and answer seemed so serious and earnest that Todoroki had little to nothing to say about his actions now. Truly, only Bakugou would do something like that without thinking twice about the possible consequences. "Well, we found the way out of here so I guess that's fine."

"Damn, I can't wait to see what the next one has in store for us," said Bakugou, the glint of excitement returning to his red eyes as he fearlessly dived forward into the black space. Todoroki followed right after him, starting to think he might have bitten off more than he can chew.

"I'll be happy for as long as it's not ghosts or anything along those lines."

"You're so fucking boring."

Chapter 6

It didn't take Bakugou and Todoroki a lot of time to reach the next dungeon stage. As if they were walking through a tunnel, light suddenly appeared before their eyes, briefly flashing them into white blindness.

In the new room, they found themselves surrounded. Countless human shapes had been spread through the entirety of the square room, their hero suit-clad muscled bodies struggling for dominance amidst their stillness. Little of the floor could be seen, such was the populational density of the room.

"Is this supposed to be a joke?" asked Bakugou to no one in particular, his eye twitching as he looked down at the hundreds and hundreds of soda can-sized wax figures surrounding them. Once again, there was no door, no windows, it was just them, the room and freaking miniature wax figures. "Am I a joke to you!? Where are the fucking ghosts!? The monsters!!! Mutants even!! But the best thing you could come up with is a fucking army of hero figures!? You are the most pathetic extremist I have ever had the displeasure of facing!!!!!!"

"I thought you said you had the dungeon all figured out already," said Todoroki, slightly amused at the so very Bakugou-like reaction he was seeing amidst a not very dungeon-like challenge, apparently.

"Shut up!" roared Bakugou, noisily clicking his tongue in annoyance. "There's something wrong with that fucker's Quirk! How is this a dungeon!? Dungeons are supposed to have things like monsters crawling everywhere! At least give us some traps that when activated cause poisonous darts to fly all over the place or release huge rolling boulders!"

-.-

Meanwhile, Kirishima…

“Ahhhhh!!” roared Kirishima as he powerfully swung his rock-hard fist towards the large boulder rolling in his and the visitors’ direction. The boulder exploded into smaller pieces at impact. As if on cue, several darts with a dark, sticky liquid dribbling from their pointy end started raining down on him. Kirishima reacted just as quickly, hardening the rest of his arms to use them as shields. “Huff… As expected of a dungeon…”

-.-

“If you say so,” acknowledged Todoroki with a shrug of his shoulders, not fully bitting into Bakugou’s version of dungeons. As far as he was concerned, this dungeon seemed more like a virtual reality puzzle game than an RPG adventure-action game. Bakugou might find complaints about it but he couldn’t be more approving of this type of dungeon. “So how do we get out of this room?”

“How would I know!? I’m still too shocked about this shit to think properly!” yelled Bakugou, aggressively gesturing at his surroundings to make his point come across. “Why don’t you start being useful and solve the mystery behind this one on your own? The show is all yours!”

“Okay,” acknowledged Todoroki. He noticed that Bakugou dropped his body down and sat on the small spec of floor they had available, an angry pouting expression putting a crease on his brows. With a sigh, he started looking around the room, slowly moving through the hundreds of figures without knocking them out.”These all seem to be figures of the heroes featured in the exhibition room. Do you think we need to find a duplicate figure or maybe even the odd one out?”

“No clue,” said Bakugou with a resentful shrug. He kept following Todoroki with a side glance as he slowly walked around the room, peeking at this wax figure, then at that one. After doing that for several minutes, his impatience started bubbling out once again. He just couldn’t stay still in place while seeing someone else trying to figure out the way out of the room. He didn’t necessarily want to cooperate on that stupid charade either, though, so he just got up and casually walked up to Todoroki, only getting even more stressed at feinting around the mini heroes. He was busted by Todoroki almost instantly, which forced him into blurting out an, “What!?”

No matter how much it annoys him, he really can’t leave things up to others, can he?, inwardly noted Todoroki. He lightly shook his head, trying to keep a chuckle from escaping his vocal cords. “No, it’s nothing.”

“Argh, this is bullshit! How are we supposed to know which one will lead us out of here!?” groaned Bakugou, finally reaching one of the walls after having spent long, boring minutes attempting to not step on anything. “They’re all the same! The only difference is that they’re different heroes from several different countries! I thought anti-foreigners extremists hated the sight of foreigners in Japan! Then why is he gathering figures of them in his stinkin’ dungeon!?”

“Bakugou, that’s it!” exclaimed Todoroki, the blonde’s angry complaining making him realise the vital point of that room. It was filled with foreign hero figures and the extremist wanted them out of his sight. Which meant… “There must be one of our heroes somewhere around here. Maybe an All Might figure or perhaps even a figure of one of the top 10- Ah……”

“What?” asked Bakugou, finding that sudden gasp and then silence a bit sketchy. He tried to rush to Todoroki, cussing a few times at the heroes getting on his way. What he found there was the most hilarious family grudge he had ever witnessed in his whole life.

"..." Without needing to think twice about it, Todoroki kicked the Endeavor figure by his feet against the wall. The figure broke and disintegrated, much like it had previously happened to the mirror, and a door appeared at the crashing site. "...That felt good…"

"I bet it did! Ahahahaha!" burst out laughing Bakugou, his body bending forward slightly in amusement. After taking a deep breath, he cleaned the tears that had gathered in the corner of his eyes from laughing so hard. "I take that one back. You're not that boring after all."

"So the difference between boring people and not boring people for you is their ability to kick their parents into oblivion?" inquired Todoroki, an eyebrow slightly arched as he stared at Bakugou in amazement. He had… never seen or heard him laughing like that.

"Yeah, pretty much," confessed Bakugou, an amused grin on his lips as he passed by Todoroki and pushed the door open. "I mean, who would want to have an obedient carbon copy of a grumpy old fart around them? Parents are way too overrated. I stopped listening to my old hag's bitching halfway through it and I turned out just fine."

"Would you kick your mother?" asked Todoroki, once again following after Bakugou as they stepped inside of the tunnel-like entrance.

".....I value my life," answered Bakugou after a long stretch of silence. He awkwardly cleared his throat and tried to change the topic. "But never mind that now. The next room better have some action or I'll be trashing the shit out of it!"

Much like before, a light appeared at the end of the tunnel, suddenly blinding their eyes into pure white as the setting around them shifted to a different room. Rather than stand in a small stretch of floor surrounded by miniature wax figures of heroes, Bakugou and Todoroki

found themselves sat down in comfortable and soft chairs, a large stage in front of them that featured a gigantic screen on the wall. A room extremely similar to any regular auditorium or cinema, only that it only had the two chairs they were using and had no doors.

The screen blinked on and off for a couple of seconds and, finally, revealed a white background with words written in it.

Question 1 out of 10
2 + 3

“Oh c’mon! You weren’t even trying when you created this dungeon, were you!?” roared Bakugou, banging his fists on the seat’s armrests. “What the fuck is this!? Two plus three!? Are you for real!? What do you think I am, a fucking newborn!? HUH!? Just what kind of dungeon has an elementary school-level quiz!? You’re supposed to ask college-level questions or some shit like that, at least! Or add a freaking time limit! Or put someone’s neck on the line if a question is answered incorrectly!!!”

-.-

At the same time, Kaminari…

“Why was I born an idiot…?” sobbed Kaminari, his eyes jumping around between the TV screen in front of him (“Question 7 out of 500: How many carbon molecules does turpentine have? Time left: 4 hours and 33 minutes” was what could be read in it), the strong round pieces of metal keeping his arms stuck to the chair’s armrests and the water starting to flood the closet-sized room. “Ugh… Where are my smart classmates when I need them…? Bakugou, why did you have to disappear on me!?”

-.-

“Don’t take it to heart, Bakugou,” said Todoroki, trying to soothe down the blonde’s raging annoyance. “I’m sure the extremist just wanted to be inclusive and made the questions accessible to anyone that ended up stuck in this dungeon, regardless of age or intelligence levels.”

“Why would a freaking terrorist-wannabe want to be inclusive!?” yelled Bakugou, turning his frustration at Todoroki like a knife. “If equality is what he wants, he’d screw all of us over in the same way! Not make escaping from here easy!!”

Todoroki’s response was silence. Rather than add fuel to the fire, he better just let Bakugou’s anger go out on its own. He might be hot-headed but he wasn’t an idiot - he wouldn’t lose himself to something as insignificant as an extremist with a weird terrorist method.

“Is it too much to ask for a decent villain around here?” sighed Bakugou, sitting back straight on the chair. He continued grumbling to himself for a few more minutes and then gave up on it completely - especially when it came to his expectations towards the dungeon. “Haa… Five…”

Question 2 out of 10
How many chairs are in the room?

“I’m going to kill that guy… I’m so gonna kill him when I get out of here…” mumbled Bakugou under his breath again and again, so Todoroki took it as his way of saying that he was totally done with that farce.

“Two,” answered Todoroki, not letting himself get bothered by

Bakugou's empty threats. He kept on answering the remaining eight questions on his own, sometimes even him finding them to be so simple and obvious that it felt as if he was being a target of an elaborated prank. If he could feel like this amidst his nearly perpetual cool personality, he couldn't even begin to imagine - again - how much Bakugou's self-control was being tested. That's why he just let him complain and moan about it without saying anything about it.

"Seriously, this is beyond ridiculous," grumbled Bakugou as he listened to Todoroki's answers. "A guy has a Quirk to create dungeons out of regular buildings and he uses it for this kind of shit? What a moron. With this kind of brains, of course there are no college-level questions. He never got there himself! This world is filled with fucking idiots… Ugh… Are you done yet, Todoroki?"

"Done," acknowledged Todoroki as soon as he gave his answer to the 10th and last question.

"Great," said Bakugou, smacking his fist on the palm of his other hand while looking around the room. "Where's that door?"

Before any of the two of them could get up from the comfortable seats, the chair disappeared from underneath them. The whole floor disappeared. Todoroki and Bakugou started free-falling into the pitch-black tunnel, Alice in Wonderland-style. What differed from the fantasy tale was that the fall didn't last an eternity like it felt like to the book's main character and neither did they end up in Wonderland.

Some could have some difficulties distinguishing the two but it was definitely not Wonderland.

"…"

“You’re not going to complain or give advises this time?” asked Todoroki, his face completely blank as he remained half-buried in the pile of animal-shaped plush toys they feel on top of.

“I hate this fucking dungeon!!” yelled Bakugou in utter frustration, grabbing the closest plush toy to him and catapulting it to the other end of the room with an explosion-fueled throw. “I hate it so much! I hate it just as much as I hate fucking Deku! I hope he’s suffering from boredom and disappointment just as much as I am!”

-.-

In another dungeon room, Midoriya and company…

“Iida-kun, there’s more of them coming in your direction!” warned Midoriya, kicking a minotaur-like creature on its skull. The dungeon monster instantly disintegrated when it crashed against the floor.

“I’m on it!” acknowledged Iida, accelerating his pace to strongly knee another minotaur-like creature on its torso. He turned his body slightly around while stretching his leg and used the engines attached to his calves to gain enough impulse to kick the monster against the wall. The two impacts hadn’t been enough to destroy that massive beast, however.

“Tsuyu-chan!” called Uraraka, touching a large rock nearby her with the pads of her fingers. No more words were needed. As soon as the rock started levitating in the air, Asui wrapped her frog-like tongue around it and catapulted the rock against the dungeon monster, finally finishing that one off.

“Only a few more dozens to go…” said Midoriya, wiping the sweat and dirt off of his face with the back of his hand.

-.-

“I’m sure he’s dealing with the boredom and disappointment better than you are,” sighed Todoroki, pushing himself up to a sitting position. He looked around the room. He had thought that the collection of miniature wax figures of heroes had been a bit excessive but that room went over the word ‘excess’. The room was quite literally flooded in plush toys, of all sizes, colours and types. He picked up a cat plush toy. No teacher or instructor had trained him on how to react to something like that room. “Bakugou, what do you-”

“The door is already over there,” interrupted Bakugou, pointing with his thumb to his left while he massaged his temple with the other hand. “Let’s not talk about this room ever again and just get the hell out of here.”

“Yes, let’s do that,” acknowledged Todoroki, throwing the cat away and getting up to a standing position.

They wobbled their way to the door, the ridiculous amount of plush toys covering the floor of the room making walking a difficult task. Once they reached it, Bakugou immediately grabbed the door handle and pushed it down. And then pushed it down again. And then a third and fourth time.

“Is the door-” started asking Todoroki but he was swiftly cut off.

“Don’t you say it,” warned Bakugou with a hissing voice, his shoulders trembling as he kept holding the door handle with a grip of iron.

“The door is locked, isn’t it?” sighed Todoroki, voicing out what he

had meant to ask before anyways.

“DIE!!!!” roared Bakugou, slamming his hand against the door’s lock and putting all of his extra nitroglycerin finally to good use. The effect of the chemical mixture had been long gone and all the moving around and annoyances he’d bumped into had made his hands and temper as explosive as they usually were. He wasn’t, however, counting on it backfiring on him. “W-Woah…!”

“Bakugou!” called Todoroki, his eyes going round as the explosion meant to blow off with the door ended up sending Bakugou flying a good couple of meters backwards, burying him in the pile of plush toys once again. He wobbled back to the initial point, checking how much damage Bakugou had inflicted on himself accidentally. “Are you okay?”

“I knew coming here with you idiots would end up in trouble for me!” hissed Bakugou, grabbing into a rabbit plush toy and tearing it into two. Other than a few burned hair ends, he was ready to face the door head-on once again. “I’m gonna turn that door into freakin’ chopsticks!!”

“Yeah, why don’t you calm down a bit first?” suggested Todoroki otherwise, putting his hand on top of Bakugou’s forehead and pushing his head down to the pile of plush toys once again. “Remember what I told you in the bathroom? Plan first, act later.”

“The door is right over there, what’s there to plan?” said Bakugou, accusingly pointing in the door’s direction. “Or what, are you going to search this entire madness until you find the key? Is that it?”

“Right now, I think it’s a better plan than to have you blow up with yourself,” pointed out Todoroki, trying to figure out if it was already safe to remove his hand from Bakugou’s head or not. “Up until now,

every dungeon room has been easily cleared. Finding the key can't be that hard. Right?"

"Stop reasoning with me with so much… reason!" groaned Bakugou as he rolled his eyes around. He pushed Todoroki's hand away from his head and sat up straight. His shoulders slumped down slightly at the realisation of the monumental task they had before them. "There must be more plushies crammed up in here than people in Tokyo…"

"Plushies…" repeated Todoroki with a snort, the word sounding so foreign yet cute when coming from Bakugou's mouth.

"Shut it!" growled Bakugou, reflexively throwing a plush toy at Todoroki's face. "Get those hands moving already!"

"Yeah, yeah," sighed Todoroki, putting the plush toy down until he noticed a certain something about it. "Oh."

"What?" interjected Bakugou right away, reacting at that small 'oh' with hopeful enthusiasm. "Did you find the key?"

"No, I found you," said Todoroki, picking up the same plush toy that had been shoved on his face and showing it at Bakugou. "Doesn't this koala look like you?"

"Where the heck does that thing look like me!?" asked Bakugou, getting completely flabbergasted at what he had just heard. Maybe Todoroki was getting more affected by that crazy dungeon room than he had initially thought. They really needed to get out of there as soon as possible.

“I mean…” Todoroki brought the koala closer to himself once again and, using his left hand as a support, he placed it next to his right upper arm, comparing the koala’s natural reflex of grabbing into trees with the hugging position that Bakugou took whenever he was trying to freshen himself up with his right side. “It’s sort of similar, isn’t it?”

“L-Like hell it is!!” roared Bakugou, turning his back at Todoroki the moment he felt his cheekbones grow unusually heated. He hurriedly picked up two different plush toys he had noticed earlier and grabbed them by their heads with one hand, shoving them in Todoroki’s direction. “And if it is, wouldn’t that make you a mix of these two!?”

“Can’t I be one of them only?” asked Todoroki, his mismatched eyes tightening slightly in sadness as he observed the polar bear and the brown bear hanging from Bakugou’s hand. He lowered the koala to his lap at the same time as he dropped his gaze to the pile of plush toys, dejectedly continuing to look for the key.

“…” Bakugou also lowered the two bear species to the pile, averting looking in Todoroki’s direction again. After a few seconds of awkward silence, he aggressively scratched the back of his head and got back up. Bakugou snatched the koala plush toy from Todoroki’s lap and rammed it against his left upper arm. “Under normal circumstances, the koala would prefer this side over the cold one.”

Bakugou walked off to another part of the plush toy pile, leaving Todoroki to catch the koala plushy before it fell down. He couldn’t quite help but smile as he returned the koala to his lap.

“I see. It makes sense, given your Quirk,” said Todoroki, softly nodding his head as he glanced down at the koala. “So under normal circumstances, you’d prefer the fire side.”

“Shit…!” cursed Bakugou when he accidentally put his foot inside of a

more hollow plush toy area and got buried in them until his waist. He angrily barked at Todoroki while peeking over his shoulder. “I was talking about koalas, not about me, you moron!”

“Then which side do you prefer?” asked Todoroki, tilting his head to the right.

“Neither!” yelled Bakugou, using his arms and hands to try to pull himself out of the plush toy hole. As he pulled and pushed away the soft objects, his hand lightly scrapped something cold and metallic. When he put it in that area a second time and groped around for a while, he managed to dig out a golden key. “Oh. Found it. Help me out of here! Quick!”

Todoroki readily got up and rushed to Bakugou, as fast as his wobbly steps would allow him. He clasped one of Bakugou’s hands and helped him climb up the unsteady plush toy hole. After a little bit of struggling and a few cusses, Bakugou managed to free himself.

“Ugh, I’m so done with this dungeon room,” groaned Bakugou, releasing a tired sigh as he adjusted the strap of his bag. They walked towards the charred door, which he unlocked with passion. He could finally forget the nightmare that room was by diving into the next dungeon room. No matter what came next, it definitely couldn’t be worse than Plushie Wonderland. “Alright, time for the next one! This one will surely be the most dungeon-like of them all! I’ll make that motherfucker regret being born if it isn’t!!”

Like with all the other doors they’ve found so far, they stepped inside a dark tunnel-like area. The same light shined at the end of it and the same white blindness overtook their eyes.

“Mommy, can I have ice cream? Can I, please?”

“I’ll buy you one for dessert, okay?”

“Yay~!!”

“Wha…?” gasped Bakugou, his eyes crashing with a regular street, with regular people walking around as they enjoyed their Saturday and searched for the perfect location to escape the heat and have lunch. He looked up, down, left and right, but nothing around him was resembling of a dungeon room. “Huh?”

“Good. Looks like we managed to get out,” said Todoroki, inwardly sighing in relief. “But where are we? I can’t see Shinjuku Bunka Center any-”

“Nooo!” yelled Bakugou, stomping one of his feet on the pavement. “Let me in! Let me go back to the dungeon! But a real dungeon this time!!!!”

“I’ll call Aizawa-sensei,” deadpanned Todoroki, fetching his cellphone from his pants’ pocket. “Oh…”

I brought the koala plush toy with me, noticed Todoroki when he glanced down at his occupied right hand. He lifted the koala in front of his face and tilted his head. *Would it be considered stealing if I took it back with me to the dorm?*

Chapter 7

“So you two have been the first ones to get out of the dungeon,” said Aizawa, observing as two of his students walked towards the sealed entrance of Shinjuku Bunka Center. “Can’t say I’m surprised there.”

“You should consider expelling the ones who take much longer than this because that dungeon is bullshit,” grumbled Bakugou, still extremely ticked off at his first dungeon experience. “Even a brat would be able to get out of there on their own…”

“Could you please give us the rundown of what happened inside of the dungeon?” inquired the police officer that was standing guard next to Aizawa. He whipped out a notebook and pen from his vest’s pocket and readied himself to register the victims’ testimony. “With as many details as possible.”

“We went to the bathroom next to the exhibition room and there was an earthquake all of a sudden,” explained Todoroki, deeming Bakugou still too hot-headed to provide proper intake. “When we got out of the bathroom stall, the bathroom had been changed to a completely different room. There was only the stall we had come out of, an endless corridor and an also endless mirror opposite to the stall.”

Why were you using the same bathroom stall?, inwardly wondered both the police officer and Aizawa, the former momentarily halting the scribbling and the later only arching an eyebrow slightly.

“I smashed the shit out of the mirror and there was a tunnel-like thing behind it,” added Bakugou, smacking his fist on the palm of his hand.

“In the second room, we had to find the odd one out in a collection of miniature wax figures of the same heroes the exhibition was about. A

door appeared when I destroyed Endeavor against the wall," continued Todoroki, reminiscing on the family grudge causing Bakugou to release a short laugh. "In the third room, we had to answer 10 very easy questions. It was things like basic math and questions whose answers you could find out by looking around the room. Once we answered them all, we fell down into another tunnel-like area. In the fourth and final room, we needed to find the key buried in the middle of hundreds of plush toys to unlock the already existing door. When we unlocked the door, we ended up in a street near Toyama Park, for some reason."

"I-I see…" acknowledged the police officer, finishing jotting down the weirdest testimony he had ever heard in his entire law enforcement career. "I'll have some officers go to that street. It might be the exit to the dungeon."

"If that's the difficulty level of the dungeon, then I won't have to worry about any of you anymore," said Aizawa, glancing over the sealed building before he addressed his two students once again. "For once you didn't get involved in a life-threatening villain attack. I commend you for that. We have your testimony already, what will you do now? Go back to school?"

"Nah, I'm sticking around this area," scoffed Bakugou, a mischievous smirk starting to tug at the corner of his lips. "I so want to see Deku's ugly mug when he comes out of the shitty dungeon."

"I'll stay too," said Todoroki, inwardly sighing at Bakugou's reply. From his experience with the dungeon, none of his friends or the visitors could be in that much danger. He knew it was just a matter of time until all eight of them were out of there. But if Bakugou was purposely staying around Shinjuku and the exhibition's site, Todoroki automatically had to stay with him. Who knew what kind of 'villain attack' would come up in the news if he didn't keep an eye out on his explosive hands…

“Don’t cause me more trouble,” warned Aizawa, his half-hidden eyes pointed at one of his students in particular. “Especially you, Bakugou. Be sure to hang out somewhere with AC and good air circulation. Not walk around the neighbourhood looking for more news headlines.”

“I know that!!” yelled Bakugou, clicking his tongue in annoyance as he turned around on his heels and walked off from the exhibition’s site. Todoroki followed after him once he bid farewell to their homeroom teacher.

“It’s good to know that no one stuck inside of the dungeon is in danger,” said the police officer, back from instructing some of his colleges into a different location. “Are you going to contact your students, Eraser Head?”

“Yes, now that I know I won’t be distracting them during a life-threatening situation,” acknowledged Aizawa, grabbing his cellphone and dialling the last number he had contacted. It took a long time for the phone call to connect but when it did… “Midoriya, how are things in the dungeon going?”

“Ah… Sensei, now’s not a good time to talk. Uraraka-san, on your left, left! Um, we’re a bit busy fighting a hydra. I-I’ll call you once we reach the next dungeon room!!”

“…” Midoriya ended the phone call before Aizawa could say anything else, leaving him staring at his phone’s screen in puzzlement. “…A hydra?”

-.-

“Bakugou, do you want to go eat something?” casually asked Todoroki, sat down on a bench next to Bakugou, eyes stuck on his cell

phone's screen. "It's past midday. You probably should be inside right now, even if we're in the shade."

"Yeah, it's getting a bit rough staying out here…" sighed Bakugou, tugging at the fabric of his t-shirt to air his sweating torso a little bit. When he glanced over to Todoroki, his face almost bumped into his cell phone - the website of a Japanese cuisine restaurant in the Shinjuku area was displayed on the screen. "...Just how desperate are you for cold soba?"

"I'm hungry," said Todoroki with a shrug of his shoulders. He insisted on obtaining an answer nevertheless. "Yes? No? Debt payment?"

"Damned Half-and-Half Opportunistic Asshole…" grumbled Bakugou under his breath, a sour expression on his face as he got up from the bench. He snatched Todoroki's phone from his hand and went to check the address and other details of the establishment - the presence of air conditioning, mainly. "Where's the fucking restaurant? I'm not paying if it's ridiculously expensive for anyone who wasn't born with a silver spoon stuck in their asses!"

"I don't have silver spoons at home so it should be fine," said Todoroki, showing the way to the restaurant.

"That's not what I…!" roared Bakugou but he felt far too hot to be able to follow through with the rest of the sentence. An empty stomach and heatwaves were not a good mixture, it seemed. And getting pissed at Todoroki there wouldn't make him any less of an annoying dumbass who couldn't understand language nuances. He sighed, "Let's just go."

"Are you feeling okay?" asked Todoroki, finding Bakugou's lack of completion on his verbal violence to be somewhat weird. And sure enough, he seemed to be paler than usual.

“Just got up too fast,” grumbled Bakugou, sulkily wiping the sweat on the palm of his hands on his pants, one by one.

“I’ll let you hug my right arm to your heart’s content after we have lunch,” reassured Todoroki, putting his ice Quirk to good use while lightly sliding the back of his hand against Bakugou’s.

“Don’t need it!” yelled Bakugou, shoving the cell phone against Torodoki’s chest. He grabbed his right hand and took the leadership position on their way to the restaurant, just a few minutes walk away from their current location. “Hurry it up already before I’m forced into having to raise the price again from five to a lifetime supply!”

He’s so not honest, inwardly sighed Todoroki, doing his best to not chuckle at the contradictory words and actions. Bakugou simply couldn’t accept a helping hand unless he was actively seeking one, could he?

They quickly arrived at the chosen restaurant, where Bakugou grudgingly ordered cold soba for both of them, alongside a side dish of vegetable tempura, a large jug of iced water and two cups of cold barley tea. The cold beverages disappeared in a matter of seconds of being brought to their table.

“Haa…! This shit usually sucks but this was the best tea I’ve had my whole fuckin’ life!” sighed Bakugou, his back comfortably slipping down slightly against the chair. He picked up his chopsticks and pointed them at Todoroki as he started devouring the soba in his plate. “Happy now?”

“Yeah,” mumbled Todoroki, briefly dipping a few soba noodles in the soy sauce-based dipping sauce. He happily slurped them up. “Fourteen

more plates to go. Or nineteen, if I count the ones being put on the tab tonight."

"Don't get too ahead of yourself!" hissed Bakugou, stabbing his chopsticks in the centre of Todoroki's soba plate. "Who said I'm gonna need you tonight too? Huh!?"

"..."

"Okay, I will but there's still a chance I might not need you at all..." grumbled Bakugou, withdrawing to his seat after crashing head-first with Todoroki's absolute 'no fucks are being given at the moment' silence treatment. He picked up a slice of fried lotus root and angrily bit half of it off. "Just order as much of this shitty cold soba as you want..."

"What kind of dishes do you like eating?" asked Todoroki, noticing that Bakugou wasn't showing as much interest in the magnanimous feast in front of them as he was.

"I like my food spicy," said Bakugou, dipping some soba on the sauce with disinterest. "The spicier, the better."

"That's so like you," snorted Todoroki, picking up a piece of fried eggplant. "My favourite food is definitely cold soba."

"Yeah! No shit, Sherlock!" laughed Bakugou, rolling his eyes around at the obvious. "A bland dish for a bland guy. At least you're not boring or I'd have blown up with the dorm by now."

"Am I supposed to take that as a compliment?" asked Todoroki, tilting

his head slightly as he slurped some soba.

“Take it any way you want,” said Bakugou with a shrug. He picked up his bag and started roaming around its contents, removing another bottle filled with the chemical concoction. “I don’t care enough to bother myself correcting you.”

“Bathroom break?” asked Todoroki right away at the sight of the bottle, immediately readying himself to follow suit to the restaurant’s bathroom.

“Yeah, bathroom break for me,” snorted Bakugou, rolling his eyes around as he got up from his seat. He leaned over the seat and took a second object from his bag. He threw the koala plush toy at Todoroki, who caught it with one hand. “There. Now you won’t get lonely while I’m away.”

“I have everything I need now, you don’t have to come back, Bakugou,” deadpanned Todoroki, retributing those teasing words with a retort of his own. He placed the koala on his lap and gently patted its head, never breaking eye contact with Bakugou as he did so. “Thank you for the meal, by the way.”

“Oh, so is that koala going to pay for the meal too, is that it?” hissed Bakugou, a pouting glare on his features as he sulkily turned around on his heels and stomped his way to the bathroom.

“...cute…” whispered Todoroki, an amused smile on his lips as he observed Bakugou leaving the seating area. With a sigh, he sat the plush toy next to him and grabbed his cell phone, entertaining himself with some online marsupial crash course while waiting for him to return to the table. The research was indeed pretty fruitful. “Oh…?”

“Shit, I’m starting to get used to the temperature in here…” grumbled Bakugou as he dropped his weight on his seat and put the half-empty bottle back inside of his bag.

“Bakugou,” called Todoroki, putting his phone back inside of his pocket. “Bakugou.”

“What!?” barked Bakugou, angrily turning his head to face the opposite side of the table.

“I’m a tree,” said Todoroki out of the blue, a dead serious look on his face.

“...Were you affected by a stupidification Quirk while I was in the bathroom or some shit like that?” asked Bakugou, a frown on his brows brought out of half worry, half utter shock. Just when he was thinking the day couldn’t become any weirder, Todoroki had to blow his mind away with that one-liner. “Should I be the one calling Aizawa-sensei this time?”

“That’s not it. It’s because you’re a koala,” explained Todoroki with a roll of his eyes. “You get all grabby with my colder right side because you want to cool yourself down, right? Zoologists have discovered that koalas hug trees to do the exact same thing. They grab onto the tree trunks to keep themselves cool. It’s pretty much their own natural AC. Bakugou, you’re a koala and I’m your tree.”

“Ahahahahahahaha!” burst out laughing Bakugou, banging his fist a couple of times on the table. After a couple of minutes of laughing his ass off - and gaining quite a lot of glances from other customers and employees -, Bakugou took a deep breath and started filling up his empty glass with water to fix his parched throat. “What, don’t tell me koalas have now become your favourite animal because you got attached to that plushy?”

“No, it’s because you get so cute when you hug me in the same way,” said Todoroki, a smile slowly starting to take shape on his lips.

“Pfffffft!” All the water Bakugou was trying to drink was expelled at full speed from his mouth. He coughed hard a couple of times, his whole face turning beet red as he did so - not from the lack of air, though. “A-Are you out of your mind!?”

“That was also quite cute,” deadpanned Todoroki, using his napkin to clean his face, upper body and table surface from the water that was sprayed all over the place. “Ouch!”

“You say the word ‘cute’ one more time, I’m gonna fucking kick you to an early grave!!!” roared Bakugou, strongly kicking Todoroki’s shin underneath the table nevertheless. “Fuck, I’m gonna kill you whether you say it again or not! Get your ass here, I’m gonna choke you to death with your prized soba noodles!!”

“You’re starting to become cute even while yelling.”

“Todoroki, I’m gonna fucking slaughter you!!”

Chapter 8

I'm so fuckin' bored… , sighed Bakugou in the back of his mind, red eyes stuck on the little bit of light blue sky he could see from in between the tree's leaves and branches. Their slightly chaotic lunch came to a conclusion when they were asked to leave, as the restaurant was going to close to get the preparations for the dinner time done - which meant they lost their little air-conditioned paradise. Rather than take guard by the entrance of the exhibition's site or stay sat down on the same bench as before, they ended up opting to stay at Toyama Park. *But the fuckin' heatwave is only making the boredom even worse…!*

To make things clear, Bakugou wasn't one to waltz around the streets without an objective in mind. He actually found it to be a pain in the ass. If he wanted or needed to do something outside, he got it done immediately, not wasting any of his precious time trying to come up with other menial stuff to do there. And that applied to both when he was on his own or with others.

Window shopping in the market district or shopping centres? Boring. Arcades and their easy as heck games? Boring. Walking around chatting about fuck all? Boring! And extremely impossible when the temperature was a sizzling 44ºC!

Even if he felt far too sluggish and fatigated to do some hiking, Toyama Park winded up being the place Bakugou hauled Todoroki to. Most people had withdrawn inside the shopping centres or a coffee store to escape the hotter hours of the day so the whole park was pleasantly void of people, except for the occasional passerby and police officers doing rounds to find any more dungeon escapees.

They did walk around for a while, in a fruitless attempt to find a hidden backdoor to return to the dungeon. But after listening to Todoroki's endless barrage of why he should give up on it - with the very sound argument that he'd probably just end up inside of Plushy

Wonderland once again -, Bakugou gave up on it completely.

Hence their current location under the shade of the large dome-like canopy of a Japanese maple tree. The sun protection offered by the tree and the large number of lakes in the park made that spot barely tolerable during a heatwave. To make it even more bearable, Todoroki conjured a fortification of ice around the tree, which turned the smallest of breezes into a paradisical haven.

But none of those things fixed Bakugou's lack of anything to do.

Damn it, what's taking those guys so long!?, inwardly barked Bakugou, laid down on the grass with his arms crossed over his chest. One of his fingers impatiently tapped on his upper arm. *Are they actually bigger idiots than I thought them to be? Is that it? Are they so fucking dumb they can't even answer 10 easy questions? Or find the different figure in a fucking collection!? Or get a damn key from a sea of freakin' plushies!?!? Is Shitty Nerd that much of a moron!? No way in hell he is! And yet, why the fuck is it just me and Todoroki who got out!?*

It didn't make sense. Yeah, Kaminari and Kirishima were as dumb as rocks but he had drilled plenty of knowledge into their brains after several study sessions. They'd manage to answer simple questions just fine. Even if they bumped into a more complicated puzzle of some sort, Kirishima had other visitors with him and whether Kaminari was alone or not, he'd also figure it out eventually. And none on the other group were as stupid as those two. Uraraka and Asui were your average high school students in terms of grades, Iida was a top honour student and Midoriya had a wicked sense of analysis after spending his whole life stalking every Quirk on Earth.

If anything, Midoriya's group should have managed to get out of the dungeon shortly after Bakugou and Todoroki did - for as much as that would have annoyed Bakugou. Unless…

Nah, no way, dismissed Bakugou, sliding his arms out of his chest and

rolling his body slightly so he could stare away at the lake half-hidden behind the icy wall. *There's no way they lucked out and got the hardcore route in the dungeon, while we got the beginner's walkthrough.*

After observing the hazy lake for a few minutes, Bakugou rolled around on the grass once again and faced the opposite direction. Todoroki was also absentmindedly observing the park's scenery while sat down with his back against the maple tree's trunk. He was certainly feeling just as tired and sluggish as Bakugou was because of the heat. Neatly sat down next to Todoroki was the annoying koala plush toy, out of Bakugou's bag again since there was no one around.

Seriously, I don't get it, inwardly grumbled Bakugou, slowly sliding one of his hands through the grass until it reached the plush toy. He turned it around and looked at it from different angles, but he still couldn't understand. He even squashed it face forward against the maple tree's trunk, to create the tree-hugging scenario Todoroki had mentioned in the restaurant, but the animal still seemed as annoying as before in his eyes. *How the heck is this butt-ugly creature supposed to be cute? I think someone needs to be checked by the ophthalmologist, maybe even by Recovery Girl. I mean, which part of this stupid furry thing looks like me!? None!!*

Bakugou grabbed the plush toy by the back of its neck and was about to explosively catapult it outside the ice fortress when that peculiar sentence crossed his mind once again.

'I'm a tree.'

And then another and another.

'It's because you get so cute when you hug me in the same way.' 'You're starting to become cute even while yelling.'

“I AM NOT!!!” roared Bakugou out of the blue, slamming the koala plush toy against Todoroki’s lap rather than throw it outside the wall of ice.

“You’re not what?” asked Todoroki, utterly lost on what was happening and why Bakugou was getting all cranky and pissed all on his own.

“I’m not cu-” barked Bakugou, but he cut himself off before the cursed word exited his own lips. He angrily rolled around on the grass and turned his back to Todoroki, an angry frown creasing his brows. “I’m not cumulating that thing with the bottles in my bag anymore!”

“Right…” acknowledged Todoroki with a certain hesitation, finding Bakugou’s wording simply nonsensical. “But you were the one who said you didn’t want to be seen walking around with a plush toy and kept it inside of your bag.”

“Ugh…” groaned Bakugou, feeling like facepalming himself. He had totally just dug his own grave, hadn’t he? There was no recovering from that blunder.

“Bakugou?” called Todoroki, finding the blonde’s sudden silence even more off-putting. He slid his body sideways and attempted to take a peek at Bakugou’s face by leaning over his lying body. “Are you getting heatstroke or maybe visual hallucinations due to the heat?”

“No, I’m not, dumbass!” growled Bakugou, slapping his palm across Todoroki’s face to push him away from him and prevent him from seeing his current expression. “Just because you lost the ability to feel shame or embarrassment somewhere along the way, it doesn’t mean I’m the same!! Now fuck off!”

“I’m just trying to do my job,” pointed out Todoroki, his body not budging a single inch against Bakugou’s terrifying grip. “It would be terrible if you blew up with this park.”

“Um…”

“I’m not going to blow up with anything!” yelled Bakugou, trying to push Todoroki away more strongly but his lying position making it difficult to put more strength on it. “And if I do, it’ll just be you, if you keep annoying me like this!”

“Excuse me?”

“What!?” barked Bakugou, glaring at the icy wall, in the same direction two different voices had come from. Todoroki soon followed suit.

“Ah… We noticed the two of you earlier when we passed by here,” said a young girl, probably around the same age as the two of them. She and the other girl friend peeking over the ice wall were now slowly withdrawing from the location, step by step. “And we were wondering if you wanted to have something fresh to drink with us at a nearby coffee store but…”

“Piss off!!” roared Bakugou, finally reaching the peak of his foul mood. “This guy is mine for the day! Go find someone else to hit on!”

“Y-Yeah, we figured as much! Sorry for interrupting!!” yelped the young girl, readily running off of the shaded area with her friend. Both of their faces were bright red, squealing incomprehensible words to one another until they disappeared completely from sight.

“Bakugou, that was-” started Todoroki before the grip on his face changed focus to only painfully squeezing his cheeks.

“Want me to rip that tongue off, is that it?” hissed Bakugou, sideways glaring at Todoroki while squeezing at his cheeks - and, subsequently, his mouth - more and more.

“I wa gona shai rud…” mumbled Todoroki in his own defence. It hadn’t been a fail-proof one, however, as the hand withdrew from his face only to be punched in the shape of a fist in the side of his torso. “Ugh…!”

“Fuck!” cursed Bakugou, rolling his body slightly more and burying his face against the grass. “Go get me something fresh to drink! Now!!!”

Maybe he really was getting heatstroke because he lost the ability to think straight for a moment there.

In the most annoyingly literal way possible.

Chapter 9

Once the afternoon came to an end and the temperature went down a couple of degrees, Bakugou resumed with hauling Todoroki all over the place. It seemed that crashing down completely on the park had helped him regain a bit more of energy - or that's the conclusion Todoroki eventually arrived to, at least.

So they followed the same pattern as before, only in the reverse direction. They returned to the same Japanese cuisine restaurant from lunchtime, where they repeated the same menu of cold soba, a side dish of tempura and loads of iced water. Todoroki was plenty of satisfied with dinner and Bakugou also seemed to be somewhat glad to be scratching off one more plate from his debt - but the peaceful dinner started to turn sour the moment Todoroki began the long quest to convince Bakugou into giving up on waiting for their classmates to get out of the dungeon.

The conclusion: Bakugou was harder to conquest than a Quirk-created dungeon and they were to return to the dorm at midnight, before the trains stopped running, whether their classmates were out or not by then.

"Why are you so damn pig-headed…?" grumbled Bakugou under his breath as they left the restaurant and walked back to the exhibition's site. Some of the police officers or pro heroes keeping the entrance sealed might give them some updates on the villain attack. That's what he was aiming for before he fully succumbed to Todoroki's spotless arguments and reasoning. "We've waited this long already… Some more hours wouldn't hurt anyone…"

"Some more hours means we won't have any way to return to the dorm," reminded Todoroki once again, releasing a small sigh as he did so. "We didn't request to spend the weekend out of the dorms so camping out here would only get us in trouble. What was it that Aizawa-sensei told you not to do?"

“To get in even more trouble…” grumbled Bakugou, his frowning expression becoming even more creased and sour-looking.

“Exactly,” acknowledged Todoroki with a short nod. “The dungeon will disappear on its own within 48 hours if they can’t get out of there on their own. That means they’d only be out Monday morning. Wouldn’t you prefer to rub that in their faces once they arrive late to the morning classes rather than wait for them out here?”

“I’m not waiting for anyone!” hissed Bakugou, throwing a raging glare at Todoroki. “I just want to be the first person telling them how stupidly dumb they all are!”

“Okay, time to go back to the dorm then,” deadpanned Todoroki, making a sharp turn and starting to walk towards the closest train station. The hand grabbing the back of his clothes prevented him from doing such, obviously.

“It’s not midnight yet,” said Bakugou, dragging Todoroki to the nearest bench and taking a seat there. He crossed his arms over his chest and challengingly looked straight at his mismatched eyes. “I’m not leaving this bench until then.”

“You’re not going to last until midnight,” pointed out Todoroki, retributing the unmoving stare with one of his own. “Your bottles are running on empty so it’s just a matter of time before your hands reach the critical stage once again.”

“Then you better do something about that before Shinjuku gets sent to hell and back,” scoffed Bakugou, shooing Todoroki away with his hand. “Hurry up and go ask them if someone got out already.”

You're the pig-headed one here…, inwardly sighed Todoroki, rolling his eyes around as he turned around and walked towards the nearest group of police officers. As he obtained the information - or lack of thereof - from the officers, he kept glancing at Bakugou, a certain worrying sprout telling him that he should make sure at all times that no spark could blow up with the whole area.

Bakugou was angry or yelling at someone one-third of his days, so all of those overly violent rebukes and impatience were more a personality trait of his than a temporary bad mood. He was easily volatile, just like his Quirk. But he had spent an entire week under the pressure of losing control of his Quirk, with little moments where he could let his guard down and relax. He was probably physically and mentally exhausted by now, utterly so. Todoroki was also tired from the heat and he'd very much rather go back to the dorm and the comfort of an AC than to withstand the humid temperature of nighttime heatwave Japan, and yet...

Constant explosion threat or not, it was extremely entertaining to spend time with Bakugou. It made Todoroki realise why Kirishima, Kaminari and even Sero had joined him for company, despite all of the cussing and lack of friendliness. Maybe it was those traits that made him so interesting. He was someone who always did and said whatever he wanted, no holding back, no dancing around other's feelings - but he was also capable of showing the most adorable of understanding and compassion underneath all of the sarcasm and hateful retorts. In his own way, he looked after everyone around him, sometimes at the expense of his own comfort.

He's worried about them but can't bring himself to say it, not even acknowledge it to himself, inwardly chuckled Todoroki, offering a small bow to the police officers after half-heartedly listening to everything they could disclose at the moment. *If it makes him feel better to wait here for them, I don't mind staying. But he'll exhaust himself completely at this rate and that's something I can't fix with my right side.*

"So? What did they say?" asked Bakugou upon Todoroki's return. "Is anyone out already?"

“They said some people have gotten out of the dungeon already, mainly visitors who had ended up in the same dungeon rooms as the pro heroes that were going to do the conference talks,” explained Todoroki, sitting next to Bakugou and giving him his right arm. “None of our classmates is within those people, though.”

“Seriously, just how fuckin’ dumb are they!?” groaned Bakugou, grabbing Todoroki’s arm automatically. He viciously sunk his fingers on his arm, releasing all of the pent up frustration on it as if a stress ball. “Or are they planning on spending the whole damned weekend in the dungeon? Is that it!? Gave up on escaping already? I’m gonna remember them of this fuckin’ failure for the rest of their lives!! That I will!!!! ...What?”

“That’s all?” asked Todoroki, his head slightly tilted as he looked up and down between Bakugou’s face and his right arm. “You’re not going to hug it like usual?”

“You’re the one who spent the whole day trying to make me self-conscious of how I try to cool myself down but you’re saying that now!?” barked Bakugou, slapping Todoroki’s arm away out of awkwardness. Half a second later, he grabbed it once again, grudgingly hugging it for dear life. “Argh, screw it!!”

“I wasn’t trying to make you self-conscious,” said Todoroki, momentarily looking the other way to be able to control himself and not laugh right on Bakugou’s face. “I do think it’s cute when you do it.”

“...”

“Bakugou?” called Todoroki, turning the other way once again. That

one should have put Bakugou screaming his lungs out at him - but it was a bit complicated to scream if one was out cold. Bakugou was tranquilly snoozing away while hugging his right arm, his head nodding sideways a little bit now and then. Todoroki couldn't help but mumble with a mild pouting, as he felt he had just been robbed of something. "The speed with which you fall asleep is not cute anymore…"

With a sigh, Todoroki slowly leaned Bakugou's head against his shoulder, trying to make his sleeping sitting position as comfortable as possible. He also took off the bag hanging on Bakugou's shoulder, putting it down next to their feet. The bag weighed nearly nothing so the bottles with the ethanol-acetone-water mixture must have run out completely. And that meant Bakugou must have been straining himself under the insufferable heatwave temperature to not accidentally blow up with anything, not even cause the smallest of sparks or flash grenades.

"You did a good job holding back and not causing any trouble," whispered Todoroki, gently ruffling Bakugou's head. The way Bakugou lightly rubbed his cheek on Todoroki's shoulder in search of the pleasant coldness made his heart speed up into a flutter and his face break into expressionlessness. *I take that back. It's cute. It's really cute.*

Now Todoroki felt conflicted. Part of him wanted to take Bakugou back to the dorm and get some proper sleep on a proper bed, alongside the cold, fresh breeze of the AC raining down on them. The other part of him didn't want to move, didn't want any random passerby to appear and wake up the cute ferocious beast getting his deserved rest after such a crazy day.

"What should I do…?" softly whispered Todoroki, staring away into the distance as he tried to measure the pros and cons of each option. It wasn't an easy choice to make so he pretended not to notice the minutes ticking away deeper into the night. Only until one of the feared passersby started yelling 'heeey!' at them, of course. Or, rather than a random passerby, it was… "Kirishima."

“Hey, Bakugou, Todoroki!!” yelled Kirishima, happily waving both hands in the air as he ran at full speed in their direction. “Glad to see you’re out too! This has been one hell of a day, hasn’t-”

“Shhh!” interrupted Todoroki, placing his finger in front of his mouth as he tried to completely hush down Kirishima’s happy-go-lucky voice before it could wake up a certain someone.

“Oh, sorry!” yelped Kirishima, slapping his mouth shut with his hands. He also quietened his footsteps and walked the rest of the way to the bench. There he found Bakugou asleep to the whole world to see. He couldn’t help but snort. “Bedtime for Bakugou already? I guess he is usually asleep by now.”

“The heatwave also doesn’t help,” added Todoroki with a shrug of his shoulders, one done very softly to not bother the sleeping blonde. “You sure took your time getting out of the dungeon.”

“Yeah, tell me about it...” groaned Kirishima, crouching down on the floor in front of the bench. He was a complete wreck, with his clothes ripped, dirty, even with some burnt marks here and there. “I heard you two got out of there before lunchtime. Damn, you and Bakugou really are amazing. I still have a long way to go before I can consider myself your equal!”

“Not at all, the dungeon was just easy,” said Todoroki, offering a small smile at Kirishima. “Do you have any news from the others?”

“I have no clue what’s happening with Kaminari but Midoriya, Iida, Uraraka and Tsuyu-chan got out of the dungeon more or less at the same time I did,” explained Kirishima, glancing around at Bakugou and Todoroki from several angles. “Their exit was at a different

location from mine so or they're on their way here or they're talking with Aizawa-sensei and the detective right about now. Were you and Bakugou waiting here the whole day?"

"Well, we spent most of the day shielding ourselves from the sun and the heat at the park since Bakugou insisted on staying at Shinjuku until you were all out," sighed Todoroki. "We returned to the exhibition's site an hour ago or so and we were planning on leaving if none of you were out by midnight. He fell asleep midway through it though."

"Yeah, I can see that," laughed Kirishima, changing his crouched down position to a sitting one on the floor. He happily grinned at Todoroki and his sleeping friend. "I wasn't counting on Bakugou waiting for us. I mean, not with a heatwave making his noggin going murderously crazy all the time. I'm a bit surprised at how unexpectedly cute he can be, especially while sleeping."

"…"

"W-What's with that face…?" asked Kirishima, slowly pushing his body away from the bench, away from Todoroki. "Why are you looking at me that way?"

"What way?" asked back Todoroki, unconsciously glaring sharp, deadly daggers at his classmate. If looks could kill, Kirishima would be very much dead right now.

"Kirishima-kun!!" happily called Uraraka, a huge grin on her smudged face as she waved at Kirishima. She came to a halt, seemingly to call the others who were stuck in the same dungeon rooms as her. "Guys, Todoroki-kun and Bakugou-kun are here too!"

It was at that moment that Todoroki made the foolish decision of quickly ripping his right arm out of Bakugou's grasp and get up from the bench as if someone had lightened his butt on fire.

"OUCH!!!" cried Bakugou as soon as his head came crashing against the hard surface of the bench, waking him up from his deep sleep in the worst kind of way. "Todoroki, I'm gonna fuckin' kill you, you fuckin' asshole! What the hell was that for!?"

"I-I'm sorry!!" yelped Midoriya on reflex, protectively covering his head and face with his arms - only to then notice his nickname hadn't been called at all. "Wait, not me?"

"Huh?" groaned Bakugou, only now noticing Kirishima's presence on the floor and the arrival of Midoriya, Iida, Uraraka and Asui to that location. The evilest smirk they had all seen in their whole lives, counting the several villains they had faced up until date, arrived at the same time as a killing headache started assaulting the place where Bakugou had hit his head. "Look who decided to come to say hello after all this time… Are you ready to FUCKIN' DIE!?"

The worrying sprout blossomed and a loud explosion echoed through Shinjuku.

-.-

"I am so dead…" groaned Kirishima, dropping his battered body down to the sofa in the communal area. "I wanna take a bath and pass out on my bed…"

"Don't take the bath," warned Iida, taking a seat in a chair to momentarily rest before he went to his bedroom. "You'll fall asleep on the tub and drown…"

“I don’t mind drowning at this point…” grumbled Kirishima, his body slowly slipping down the sofa.

“Me too…” acknowledged Midoriya, also succumbing to his tiredness on the sofa.

“Me three…” groaned Uraraka, not able to reach as far as the sofa’s seat. She sprawled her body over the sofa’s backrest and ceased all movement in her body. Asui was nearly knocked out on the seat next to Iida.

“Shut up and go take a bath, you’re all disgusting!” roared Bakugou, pressing a piece of Todoroki’s ice to the side of his head. He didn’t even want to know what the hell was that highly inflammable sticky mess covering a large portion of Midoriya and company’s clothes, all he knew is that he wanted to have nothing to do with it anymore.

“How about giving us some slack here, Bakugou?” requested Kirishima, lifting his arm in the air to sluggishly wave at his friend. “You were the one who gave the final blow by literally blowing up with us…”

“At least be a little bit nicer to us, Kacchan…” sighed Midoriya, lifelessly dropping his head on the sofa’s backrest. “None of us wanted to get stuck inside of that hellish dunge- MNGH!”

“I’ll be a little bit nicer to you on your funeral,” hissed Bakugou, passing behind the sofa and shoving the piece of ice down Midoriya’s throat. “Until then, suck it up.”

“Bakugou, chill out,” said Kirishima, forcing his tired body to get up

from the sofa so he could slap his hand on Bakugou's back. "Let's all go take a nice, long soak in the bath, turn on the AC in the rooms to the max and sleep off the fact you nearly killed us all after we finally managed to escape that terrifying dungeon… Well, all of us except Kaminari since he's still in there…"

"I'm not getting inside of the same bath as those two slimy morons," said Bakugou, frowning at Midoriya and Iida in utter disgust. "I don't even want to be in the same division as them!"

"Right, it might be for the best if you're far away from them until they take those clothes off…" acknowledged Kirishima, putting his arm around Bakugou's shoulders to pull him away from the sofa, Midoriya and Uraraka. Bakugou's accidental explosion would have been big already on its own but none of them was counting on the blood of some of the dungeon monsters to be extremely inflammable and catch fire. It was a miracle none of them had been burnt to a crisp or gotten third-degree burns all over them. "Let's go just the two of us for the time being. Oh, wanna come too, Todoro- Hiii! S-Seriously, why are you looking at me with that face!?"

"What face?" asked Todoroki, furiously glaring at Kirishima once again - unconsciously. Steam was being released from the left side of his body - unintentionally. He walked up to the sofa, put his hands in between Kirishima and Bakugou, and spread them apart - purposely - before changing his course towards the elevator. "I'll go take a bath later."

Todoroki punched the elevator's button and disappeared in it as soon as it got down there.

"Is the heatwave also starting to affect his Quirk?" asked Kirishima to no one in particular, an eyebrow slightly arched on his brows as all of them silently observed Todoroki storm off of the ground floor.

“No clue…” mumbled Bakugou, his gaze lingering in the elevator’s closed doors for a while longer before he returned to the back and forth argument over baths and why one shouldn’t try to blow up with his classmates.

-.-

Todoroki was in his room trying to not think about anything when he was startled out of his focus by a sudden banging on his door. He didn’t even need to wonder who was the person that had aggressively kicked the door in the middle of the night.

“What’s taking you so long!?” roared Bakugou as soon as the door opened. He slapped the koala plush toy against Todoroki’s face and made his way inside of his room without waiting for an invitation. “You forgot that thing inside of my bag.”

“Oh, right…” mumbled Todoroki, bringing the plush toy together with him to deeper inside of the room. He neatly placed it on top of his desk. “Ah… How’s your head?”

“You’ll know once I slam your head against a bench made out of cement!” hissed Bakugou, throwing a dirty glare at Todoroki. “You could have at least woken me up before you decided to jump out of there!”

“I know, sorry...” apologised Todoroki, his shoulders slumping down instantaneously.

“Argh, whatever,” grumbled Bakugou under his breath. How was he supposed to stay angry when the other person looked like a puppy kicked by its owner? He sighed. “Hurry up and take your bed out. I’m too tired to deal with any more shit for today…”

“My bed?” repeated Todoroki, his body straightening up like an arrow.

“No, the neighbours’ bed,” sarcastically scoffed Bakugou, rolling his eyes around. “Of course it’s your bed! Or do you want me to drag mine here from the 4th floor?”

“I sleep in a futon,” explained Todoroki, pointing at the wardrobe where he stored the bedding while it wasn’t being used. “We’re not going to fit in it together.”

“Then your left side can sleep on the floor, I only need the right one,” said Bakugou with a shrug. He was forced to backtrack a little bit when he was faced by Todoroki’s stony expression. “I was just kidding. If we fit in my bed just fine, there won’t be any problem with your futon either. Unless you sleep in a kid-sized one. Now chop-chop. I want to put this headache of mine to sleep…”

After hearing that closing line, Todoroki did as he was told and took the futon out, getting the bedding ready to be used in a matter of minutes. Bakugou unceremoniously flopped down on top of it while he went to fetch the AC’s remote and turned it up a few notches colder.

“Should I create some ice for your head?” asked Todoroki as he laid down next to Bakugou.

“Nah, too troublesome,” declined Bakugou, slowly leaning the large bump on the side of his head on Todoroki’s shoulder at the same time he pulled his right arm closer to his chest and wrapped his arms around it. A small groan escaped his lips at the skin contact with the headache’s source. “Ngh… Sleeping with you is more dangerous than I

thought. First you try to break my ass… then you try to break my head… What are you… going to break… ne…"

"Your speech, apparently," chuckled Todoroki in amusement. Bakugou's ability to instantly fall asleep truly was a mystery of nature. Slightly exasperating at times but the cuteness in it compensated for it in full. He quickly caressed Bakugou's head and then turned off the lights. "Good night, Bakugou."

"Nn… 'Night..." mumbled Bakugou, pulling Todoroki's arm closer to him.

I might not have a good night, though, Bakugou…, inwardly sighed Todoroki, sliding his left hand through the tatami floor to search for his cellphone. It was nowhere near him. He withdrew his hand back to the futon, before lifting it and dropping it back on top of Bakugou's head a second time. *Just a little bit more then...*

Chapter 10

Todoroki had never considered himself to be one of those people who could stay in a profound sleeping state no matter what was happening around them. But it seemed he was now discovering a new side of himself.

Bakugou, this is no longer just my right side…, sighed Todoroki inwardly, his body stuck motionless on his futon. The man he thought to be a koala hugging a tree was perhaps turning out to be a vicious snake wrapping itself around its next meal - his right leg was being wrapped around by Bakugou's legs, his right arm had been closely fastened between the blonde's chest and arm (and it had been like that for quite a while since he could hardly feel his limb), and Bakugou's other arm was spread over Todoroki's torso, tightly gripping at the opposite end of the futon. If that had been a mixed martial arts match, Bakugou would have won by a landslide.

"Bakugou," softly called Todoroki, trying to wake Bakugou up as gently as possible. In the position they were in, he could very well end up with a broken arm if he angered the koala-slash-snake too suddenly. He lifted his free hand and lightly tapped on Bakugou's arm. "Bakugou, wake up."

"Nn… Shut up…" groaned Bakugou with a drowsy voice, his hand releasing the futon so he could shoo away whatever was tapping on his arm. He shifted his body against the cooling human pillow, burying his face against Todoroki's shoulder to avoid the sunlight slipping in through the window. "Weekend… Sleep compensation…"

"You can continue compensating your lost sleep but I'd like to have some breakfast while it's still morning," said Todoroki, grabbing Bakugou's hand before it could lock up on the futon once again. He gulped in dry. "I also need to go to the bathroom…"

“I’ll cook you some soba later…” mumbled Bakugou, his moving arm losing all of its strength as he did so.

“That doesn’t fix my bathroom problem,” pointed out Todoroki in half exasperation. He used Bakugou’s completely limp body as an opportunity to slide both arm and leg out of his grasp but he was a strong opponent even while half-asleep. The legs around Todoroki’s leg tightened once again nearly as soon as he attempted to free himself - which was the last thing Todoroki wanted, given his current condition down below. “Bakugou, c’mon. Hey-”

“Ugh… I get it already…” groaned Bakugou, sliding his hand over Todoroki’s chest so he could shut up that complaining mouth. He sluggishly released both leg and arm, turning his body so he could lift himself up from Todoroki’s body. It didn’t work as smoothly as planned, due to his still very drowsy brain, so he wound up sitting down on Todoroki’s leg rather than the futon. He yawned as if he had all the time in the world, lightly rubbing his sleepy red eyes as he fully put his engines into motion. Then he finally took his hand out of Todoroki’s mouth and got up to slowly pace towards the door. “I’m cutting today’s soba charge in half.”

“Okay…” acknowledged Todoroki, his body shock still on his futon even after the door was closed. That had been way too much for him to intake so early in the day. Cute koala Bakugou, sexy snake Bakugou - what other façades had he yet to discover?

Todoroki slapped his hands on his face while sighing his thoughts away. As he slid them across his blushing features, the pads of his fingers lingering on his lips. The place where Bakugou’s palm had pressed down on. He slowly licked his bottom lip.

“It’s sweet…”

-.-

“Morning, Bakugou!” greeted Kirishima, lifting his hand at Bakugou to signalise his position on the dining table. “How’s your headache doing?”

“Better,” shortly answered Bakugou, going to the kitchenette and piling up some bread on a plate.

“I have great news for you,” said Sero, sat down next to Kirishima also eating some late breakfast. “The weather report just said the heatwave will be officially over tomorrow. Goodbye 40ºC plus temperatures, hello rain and cold!”

“Oh, I see,” acknowledged Bakugou, also joining his two friends on the dining table. He quietly mumbled to himself, “...bummer…”

“I thought you’d be happier to hear about the heatwave’s end,” pointed out Sero, an eyebrow slightly arched as he observed the lifeless reply he obtained out of Bakugou. “Or were you starting to get used to it?”

“I’m happy! I’m so happy I could fucking cry!!” roared Bakugou, angrily biting off a chunk of his bread as he pretended to not hear the second remark. Oh, he was getting used to it alright. A bit too used to it, actually. Not to the sizzling temperatures caused by the heatwave, though - it was at the cooling down method he had discovered thanks to it. “Now shut up and eat your food!”

“Yes, mom~” teasingly said Sero, rolling his eyes around.

“Hey, Todoroki! You’re down here too!” said Ashido with a super excited voice. She ran towards the dining area, almost jumping on top of the table with all the eagerness she was currently experiencing. “It’s yours and Bakugou’s turn to tell us what happened in the dungeon!”

“Yeah, we totally wanna hear the version of the two who got out of there the fastest!” added Hagakure, only her clothes visible as she jumped around in excitement.

“Oh yeah!” yelped Kirishima, almost as if he only now had remembered about the events of the previous day. “We never got to tell each other what happened inside of the dungeon, with all the confusion and explosions. What kind of traps did you get?”

“Traps?” asked Bakugou, a frown starting to crease his brows. “What traps?”

“You know, like the ones I got,” said Kirishima, adjusting his sitting position so he could start narrating his adventure. “Huge boulders rolling around through super tight corridors, poisonous darts flying all over the place, sudden pitfalls, fake walls and moving statues, loads and loads of mechanised weaponry raining down from all over the place. Even flame-throwing gargoyles!”

“We fell down a pitfall in one of the dungeon rooms,” said Todoroki, nonchalantly getting some bread and filling a glass with juice. Bakugou was in utter silence, looking at Kirishima as if he had just heard the most ridiculous tale ever. “Well, kind of.”

“Oh,” interjected Ashido, her excitement diminishing a little bit at getting such a bland answer from Todoroki. “Then it must have been the same type that Tsuyu-chan, Ochaco-chan and the guys got! What kind of monsters did you have to fight? They got minotaurs and hydras! They even had to take down Cerberus and a… What was the

name again? Oh, a manticore! They had to fight Cerberus and a manticore in the same dungeon room! While protecting the other visitors!"

"Yeah, I'm definitely going to kill that guy now…" grudgingly mumbled Bakugou, forcing himself to swallow the rest of his breakfast as fast as possible. He got up from his seat and started walking towards the front door.

"Hey, don't run away!" called Sero, leaning his head back so he could follow Bakugou's escape. "Tell us what happened in the dungeon!"

"I have to go to the infirmary to get my head checked!" hissed Bakugou, throwing the middle finger at Sero.

"Hey, it's great you're finally giving your mental health some attention but you could give us some juicy details before, no?" scoffed Sero, a knowing smirk on his lips. That should suffice to get Bakugou howling details at them… or not.

"I have a bump on the side of my head bigger than Tokoyami's beak!" roared Bakugou, grabbing one of Midoriya's sneakers and throwing it at the dining area from the entrance door. "Fuck you!!"

"We got a koala," answered Todoroki, tranquilly eating his breakfast amidst all of the yelling and cussing.

"A koala?" repeated Ashido, turning her attention to Todoroki. "What's with that? That's super cute!!"

"Was it hugging a tree or something, like they usually do in

Australia?" excitedly asked Hagakure, her clothes waltzing closer to Todoroki to hear more details about it.

"Only when it felt too hot," said Todoroki, sneaking a sideways glance at Bakugou as he munched on his bread.

"Oh my god, that's totes adorable!" squealed Ashido, a dreamy look on her face. "So cute! Now I really want to see some koala pictures! Koalas are just so super cute, especially when they're in that characteristic tree-hugging pose of-"

"Shut up!!" roared Bakugou, his ears and back of his neck beet red as he finished putting his shoes on and violently opened the front door. "They're not cute! So not cute! They're *not* cute, okay!?"

With that, Bakugou exited the dorm and slammed the door shut with enough strength to make the whole building shake.

"What's with him all of a sudden?" asked Kirishima, an eyebrow slightly arched at that explosive reaction. "Did he have a hard time facing that dungeon koala? Or is it just the heat getting the best of him already?"

Todoroki inwardly chuckled at Bakugou's overreaction over Ashido and Hagakure's words, using his breakfast as a means to keep his amused smile well hidden from everyone else. Koalas had officially earned his respect, with some deserved merit being attributed to their classmates.

"Geez, all he needs to do is hold out for one more day," sighed Sero, resuming with his breakfast. "He'll be free from the heatwave's curse from tomorrow onwards. Us too, since there won't be any more explosion threats around us during the night."

“What?” interjected Todoroki, suddenly startling awake from his inner musings. “The heatwave is…”

“Yeah, the weather report that was on the TV earlier said the temperature is going to go down starting tomorrow,” explained Kirishima, whole-heartedly glad that Bakugou could finally take it easy once again. “The world can finally sleep peacefully once again now that the rain and cold are making a come back!”

“Yeah…” acknowledged Todoroki, his mismatched gaze falling to his half-eaten breakfast. He ended up adding a mumbled, “That’s great...”

Todoroki didn’t actually think it was great. It wasn’t great at all.

Chapter 11

“I can’t focus...” sighed Todoroki, dropping his mechanical pencil on top of the open notebook on his low desk. His brain wasn’t feeling like getting homework done and the rest of his body followed suit. With another long sigh, he laid down his upper body over the desk, squashing the studying materials underneath him. “Why are heatwaves so short…?”

He had started helping Bakugou cooling down out of a sense of responsibility. On the night he accidentally exploded with his bedroom, Todoroki only made the situation harder on him by freezing his hands and he thought he could make up for it by giving him his right hand whenever he was in a bind. He wasn’t counting on having to share a bed with Bakugou for the rest of the week. He wasn’t counting on enjoying spending time with Bakugou so much. He wasn’t counting that the prospect of returning to their usual daily lives after experiencing all of that would be so devastating.

“I want to continue being a tree…” mumbled Todoroki, turning his head against the desk so he could glance at the koala plush toy by the corner next to the wall. He placed his hand on top of the koala’s head and gently ruffled it. It felt nowhere close to what it was like to ruffle Bakugou’s spiky yet soft hair. Nowhere close at all. “It doesn’t matter if he’s a koala or a snake or something more, I want to continue sleeping next to him…”

But he wouldn’t be able to, starting tomorrow. They were on the last day of the heatwave and the usual early Fall weather would return right afterwards. Bakugou would no longer need to have a portable cooling tool around him during the day and a temperature regulator body pillow during the night. The koala no longer needed the tree, it could go back to being the ferocious beast he was so well known as.

Todoroki still had the soba debt payments to look forward to but just that wasn’t enough. Having the koala plush toy as a physical memory

of those few unusually hot days and nights couldn't even start scratching that itch he felt inside of his chest. The thought of not being able to see Bakugou's adorable sleeping face and be half-strangled by him with a grappling move throughout the night filled him with an overwhelming feeling of loss.

If that was the case, then how could he maintain their current status quo?

After having his brain go round and round with thoughts and possible strategies for minutes to no end, Todoroki gave up on trying to figure it out by himself and grabbed his cellphone. He dialled one of the few entries in his contact list.

"Hello, Midoriya?" said Todoroki as soon as a slightly tired voice picked up the call. "Sorry to bother you while you're resting from yesterday's dungeon fights."

"No, it's okay. Don't worry about it," reassured Midoriya. *"Did something happen? It's rare for you to call when we're in the same building."*

"No, I was just wondering about something," said Todoroki, straightening his sitting position slightly as he kept glancing at the koala. "What would you do to continue sleeping with someone?"

"Argh!!" Crashing sounds ensued until Midoriya could properly pick up his phone from the floor. *"W-What? S-S-Sleeping…? By 'sleeping', you mean…?"*

"Sharing the same bed?" explained Todoroki in the shape of a question. Maybe he should have worded his previous question differently, considering Midoriya's seemingly flustered response.

“Oh,” interjected Midoriya, halting all words momentarily. *“Um… I’ve never dated anyone so I might not be the best person to answer that question. But if I was going out with someone and wanted to keep sleeping next to them, I’d just tell them that? Though I have no idea what I’d do if they said no to that, ahahaha…”*

“What if you’re not dating that person?” further inquired Todoroki, coming to a sudden realisation. Dating? Going out…?

“Why would I share the bed with someone I’m not dating?” asked back Midoriya with a short laugh. *“Did you perhaps mean sharing the bed with family, Todoroki-kun? I don’t have any siblings and I was never one to sleep with my mom when I was little. But I’m probably a bit too old to do any of the two now, don’t you think?”*

“I see,” acknowledged Todoroki, his mismatched eyes shining in pure enlightenment. “Thanks.”

“No problem,” said Midoriya. *“I’ll see you later then.”*

Todoroki ended the call and dropped his phone on top of the low desk. He placed his elbows on the desk and crossed his fingers in front of his mouth, deep in thought as he stared at the wall.

Dating… Dating Bakugou… , inwardly mumbled Todoroki. Dating equalled to a romantic relationship and it came associated with all sorts of bonus features. One of them being, yes, exclusive access rights to each other’s beds. *I don’t need to be a tree to sleep with Bakugou. I can just date him!*

It was such a simple solution that Todoroki couldn’t believe he hadn’t

thought of it before. If they were going out, that meant they would have a reason why they could share the same bed, whether it was hot or cold. They could continue hanging out together. They could go eat out at other restaurants and laze around at the park. Todoroki would be at a higher level than Kirishima, Kaminari, Sero, Midoriya and the rest of their classmates. Dating also meant taking in a lover so down the rabbit hole of teenage fantasies went Todoroki's brain.

"This confirms everything, doesn't it?" sighed Todoroki, his cheekbones smeared in light pink. "I fell in love with him…"

Becoming aware of the feelings that slowly sprouted within him throughout the last couple of days made Todoroki happier than he thought possible. Maybe there was some truth behind the common belief that love made people act like idiots at times because he was absolutely certain that he must have a pretty goofy expression right about now. Not to mention the questions he had just made Midoriya - that was definitely something one wouldn't usually ask their friends.

"Now I feel like seeing Bakugou," whispered Todoroki to himself. He closed his notebook and got up from his low desk, giving one last pet to the koala's head before he walked to his bedroom's door. He found an unexpected visitor on the other side. "Bakugou…"

"Geez, don't open the door like that all of a sudden! I almost smashed the dishes on the floor!" hissed Bakugou, hurriedly taking a better hold to the plate on his hands. He then motioned it forward, lightly bumping the plate against Todoroki's chest. "Here."

"Can you read minds?" asked Todoroki, still surprised at the immediate coincidence of getting to meet Bakugou just as he was on his way to do so.

"No, you idiot, I can check the time on a clock," said Bakugou with a

roll of his eyes. “I told you I’d cook you some soba for lunch, didn’t I? Well, there you have it. This makes… 14 left to go, with last night’s discounted charge.”

“Thanks,” acknowledged Todoroki, taking the plate from Bakugou’s hands. He looked around a little bit and then asked, “You’re not going to eat anything?”

“Do you really think I’m the kind of person who would prepare someone else’s food before eating my own?” snorted Bakugou. “I ate my lunch as soon as I came back from the boring-ass lecture in the infirmary.”

“What did Recovery Girl say about the bump on your head?” asked Todoroki, worriedly taking a peek at the left side of Bakugou’s head.

“It’s just a nasty bump,” dismissed Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. “It’ll go away in a few days. Since I don’t even have a headache anymore, Recovery Girl just told me to stay well behaved at the dorm and not explode with anything for 24 more hours. As if I needed her to remind me of that too… Now cut the small talk short and go eat your cold soba.”

“Ah…” Todoroki motioned his hand forward to prevent Bakugou from leaving but he found himself rooted in place. It seemed that bringing up dating topics in a conversation was harder than he thought when the person he was talking to was the person he was crushing on. As he sadly observed Bakugou getting on the elevator and leave for the floor below his, he mumbled, “It would be weird if I were to ask Midoriya how to ask someone out, wouldn’t it…? Especially if Bakugou is that someone…”

With a sigh, Todoroki retreated back to his bedroom with his lunch. Well, he at least had gotten some food cooked by Bakugou himself so

he could make do for the time being. That single plate of cold soba was worth more than all the plates of cold soba he had eaten his whole life and he intended to savour all of it while strategizing his next steps - after all, Todoroki had half a day to figure out how to get Bakugou to date him.

“As a fellow koala, what do you think I should tell… him…” asked Todoroki, directing both words and gaze at the koala plush toy on his desk - or, to be more precise, the last place he had seen it. “Huh?”

No matter how much Todoroki searched around his room, he couldn’t find the koala plush toy anywhere.

-.-

Bang bang bang!

“Damn it! I just got back to my room, who the fuck is knocking like that!?” roared Bakugou, violently swinging his bedroom’s door wide open at hearing the rushed knocking.

“The koala is gone!” hurriedly said Todoroki, slightly out of breath after having run down the stairs until the floor below at full speed. “I couldn’t find it anywhere, no matter how many times I searched my room!”

“Great,” said Bakugou, inwardly celebrating the disappearance of that annoying furry thing. But when he noticed the disheartened expression on Todoroki’s face, he felt slightly - just very, very slightly! - bad for all the times he had thought about getting rid of the plush toy personally. He softly cleared his throat and added, “I mean, if it’s gone, then that must mean everyone got out of the dungeon, right? It was a prop created together with it, it was sort of obvious it would

disappear the moment everyone cleared the dungeon or it went away on its own after the 48 hours time limit ended. I don't even know how you managed to bring that thing out with you."

"Oh…" Unfortunately for Todoroki, that did make sense. That plush toy had been just as real as all the monsters and traps their classmates had faced in the dungeon. It went away the moment its purpose had been fulfilled. If every visitor, Kaminari included, had finally exited the dungeon, then all that came with it would fade away, just like the mirror Bakugou broke in the endless bathroom corridor had. "That's true…"

"..." Bakugou was now left at a lack of what to say, with Todoroki looking so unusually depressed because of a plush toy. "Can't you, like… buy one?"

"It's not the same…" said Todoroki, his shoulders slumping down even further. He slowly stepped inside of Bakugou's bedroom while motioning his half-limp right arm forward. "Could you cool down against my arm for a little bit?"

"Hell no! I don't even need to cool down right now, with the AC on at full blast and all," refused Bakugou right away. He wasn't going to stomp as low as to be a replacement for a freaking plush toy! No way in hell would he-

"Please?" requested Todoroki once again, looking straight at Bakugou's eyes.

"Ugh… F-Fine!" yelped Bakugou, lunging his hand forward and yanking Todoroki into his bedroom, slamming the door shut right afterwards. He sourly grabbed onto his right arm and closely hugged it against his torso. "Happy now!? I'm giving you 60 seconds before I forcibly wipe off that fuckin' disgusting look from your face!"

You're so gentle, Bakugou, inwardly chuckled Todoroki as he observed Bakugou nearly grinding his teeth to dust in frustration. He was probably pushing it a bit too far by taking advantage of the situation like this but the koala plush toy had contributed plenty to bring them to this point. It wouldn't hurt to give it one last homage.

"I heard from Sero that the heatwave ends today," noted Todoroki, keeping his voice slightly lower than usual. If he were to recover his usual demeanour too quickly, Bakugou would let go of his arm and hurriedly kick him out until he needed him during the night. "Will your Quirk be okay with the sudden drop in temperature?"

"Yeah, it'll just go back to normal," grumbled Bakugou with a slight pout. It wasn't just his Quirk that was going to return to normal, everything else would also return to how it was before. That probably annoyed him even more than the damned koala thing had.

Though he wanted to be a famous pro hero that saved and helped millions at a time, he also knew how to value the small actions. Sometimes you didn't need to defeat a villain or prevent even more deaths during a natural disaster to help someone; a small pat on the shoulder at the right moment or the split time decision of sharing a bed for cooling down purposes could be just as meaningful. If Bakugou hadn't managed to get some sleep when he needed it the most, he probably would have gone completely insane due to sleep deprivation or ended up inadvertently blowing up with the dorm or other building, possibly causing wounded, maybe even some casualties, in the process. That was the total opposite of the ideal Bakugou was fighting for; it was something the former number 1 hero, All Might, would never allow to happen.

Bakugou was thankful that Todoroki conceded to his unreasonable demands, even if the reasons behind the temporary dependence on his right, cooler side somewhat changed along the way. Not that he'd ever tell Todoroki any of that, especially the thankful part. Or the gradual shift from necessity to self-indulgence part. He had a pride to keep

and a heatwave would be the last thing to get a crack on it.

“Your 60 seconds are over,” sighed Bakugou, slowly releasing Todoroki’s arm and taking a few steps back. “Now go bawl your eyes out for your stupid koala plushy on your own room.”

“For future reference, did my right side help you as much as an AC?” asked Todoroki, following Bakugou with his gaze as he went back to his desk. “Or did it have a different type of cooling down effect?”

“What’s with the sudden service satisfaction inquiry?” snorted Bakugou, rolling his eyes around at the unexpected questions while he organised his textbooks on his desk. “It’s the same thing as sleeping glued to an AC, but without the risk of getting electrocuted or hypothermia.”

“Then do you think my left side would have the opposite effect during the winter months?” asked further Todoroki.

“Who knows?” said Bakugou with a shrug. “It’s not like your left side could cook a sunny-side-up egg if I were to crack one on top of your arm, right?”

“If I’m not using my Quirk, it wouldn’t,” deadpanned Todoroki. Good thing no one had been around to hear that question or he had the feeling their classmates would have obtained a new use for his Quirk. Being a portable AC for Bakugou was one thing, it was another to become a frying pan. “If it had the opposite effect during the colder months but only when I’m using my Quirk, would it be handy for you?”

“Yeah, I guess,” half-heartedly replied Bakugou, starting to give more attention to what he was doing on the desk than to the questions

being made. “Handier than layer after layer of clothes, at least.”

“Do you want to monopolise both sides by dating me, then?” asked Todoroki, walking up to Bakugou.

“Sure, whatever,” said Bakugou with a shrug. Then he froze completely, before looking up to Todoroki. “...Wait, what?”

“I can be cold when you need to cool down and I can be hot when you need to heat up,” pointed out Todoroki, a serious expression on his face as he came to a stop next to the completely flabbergasted Bakugou. “You have terrible sleep posture, you’d definitely get electrocuted if you tried to share the bed with the AC. I’m a much safer option.”

“Remember me who’s the one with a huge bump in the head again?” hissed Bakugou, a frown starting to scrunch up his face and hide the growing blush on it. “Or who almost needed a hip replacement surgery?”

“That’s not a no,” chuckled Todoroki at seeing the return of the so feared ferocious beast.

“It’s not a yes either!” roared Bakugou, strongly elbowing Todoroki on his gut. He grabbed him by the collar of his shirt and yanked his upper body slightly down before he crash-kissed him. “Shit, you totally set me up just now, didn’t you!?”

“Just a little bit,” confessed Todoroki, gently cupping Bakugou’s blushing cheeks with both hands and kissing him again. “The koala really did disappear, though.”

“Fuck the koala, you have me, you opportunistic asshole!” hissed Bakugou one last time before all but melting against his tree.

Good thing the AC was on at full blast or Bakugou could have ended up blowing up with the second dorm room in less than a week.

Chapter 12

“I’m back…” tiredly greeted Kaminari as he stepped inside of the communal area of Heights Alliance. With a small sniff, he took his shoes off and made a half-dead beeline to his surprised classmates. “I’m finally back…”

“Kaminari!!!” excitedly called Kirishima, readily running towards Kaminari, together with Sero and Uraraka, who were just as happy to see him as he was. “You’re out of the dungeon!!”

“What took you so long?” asked Uraraka, patting Kaminari’s back with her usual bubbly, energetic grin on her face. “What kind of dungeon did you end up getting? Traps and flying weapons? Or was it monsters?”

“It was a one-way ticket for PTSD every time I’m asked a question…” sobbed Kaminari, a shudder visibly running down his whole body. “I will never be able to watch any quiz show on the TV without flashbacks from that chair…”

“Chair? What chair?” repeated Sero, exchanging a quick questioning glance with Kirishima before he continued hearing Kaminari out.

“You know how we usually complain about needing to take exams and tests and the like?” said Kaminari, shaking his head around to shoo away those dark, terrifying memories. “That’s nothing compared to being tied up to a chair in a room slowly getting filled with water every time you give a wrong answer to a 500 questions quiz. And then another… And another…”

“Oh…” hesitantly acknowledged Kirishima. He tried to comfort his friend by gently patting him in the back and leading him to the sofa so

he could get some more rest. “That’s rough, dude… You did a good job hanging in there!”

“Do you want me to prepare you a cup of tea to help you relax?” worriedly offered Yaoyorozu, crouching down next to Kaminari to take a better look at his slightly pale complexion and provide him with the best tea leaves she had on stock at the moment. However, before she could get anything else out of him, Kaminari tightly grabbed both of her hands. “Eh?”

“Yaomomo, thank you!!!” said Kaminari, repeatedly bowing his head at Yaoyorozu. “If you hadn’t helped us out with those studying sessions, I’d have drowned in the dungeon! I owe you my life!!!!!”

“You should aim for the boobs, not the hands, you virgin…” grudgingly mumbled Mineta, biting at his thumb in envy. “That’s how the ladies like to be thanked… Heh…”

“Mineta-chan, be quiet,” said Asui, slapping the back of Mineta’s head with her extended tongue.

“What’s with all the noise?” asked Bakugou, leisurely walking out of the elevator together with Todoroki. “Oh right, Dunce Face is finally out.”

“BAKUGOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOU!!” cried out Kaminari, getting up from the sofa as fast as lightning. He immediately started running towards Bakugou, his arms outstretched in his direction. “Here’s my other saviour! I’d be so very dead right now if it wasn’t for your spartan tutoring! Thank yooooo- UGH!”

Just as Bakugou was at arm’s length of Kaminari’s embrace, Todoroki stretched his arm sideways to placate him. Kaminari came crashing

neck first against the arm, before having one of his shoulders tightly gripped. Bakugou couldn't have cared less as he continued walking towards the kitchenette area.

"Thanks," said Todoroki, a fuming gaze on his mismatched eyes as he gave a couple of pats to Kaminari's shoulder.

"Ah… Yeah. You're… ah… welcome? I guess?" babbled Kaminari, utterly lost in what was happening. What was Todoroki so aggressively thanking him for? He had spent nearly the entire weekend stuck in the sadistic dungeon, what could he have possibly done wrong and right at the same time? "Could you let go of my shoulder now? Your hand's getting a bit too hot to be safe…"

"When will you two tell us about what happened inside of the dungeon?" asked Sero, returning to the sofa. "We got Kirishima's trap inventory, we got Uraraka, Tsuyu-chan and the others' Greek mythology fantasy tale and we even got to hear a bit of Kaminari's traumatic experience with deadly quiz games. There's no way you two only got one pitfall and some sort of koala creature in the dungeon, right?"

"Yeah, I'm also dying to know what kind of dungeon you two faced!" added Uraraka, excitedly nodding her head as she sat next to Asui. "You got out of there so fast. And while Bakugou-kun was at his lowest physical condition ever, at that!"

"Who's in a low physical condition!?" barked Bakugou, slamming a wok and a saucepan on the stovetop. "Rolling boulders, fuckin' minotaurs, a quiz, all of that would have been a piece of cake! Just another walk through the park! Now shut up about that damned dungeon before I go get the extremist out of jail and present him to the judge with half of his bones broken!!"

“Hey, Todoroki. Give us some details,” requested Kirishima with a hushed voice. He took a quick glance at Bakugou, too busy going around the kitchenette area preparing food to fully pay attention to them, and then added, “The more Bakugou refuses to talk, the more curious we’re getting. Just take us out of our misery already and spill the beans a little bit, yeah?”

“Are you sure you want to know?” asked Todoroki, an eyebrow slightly arched. Everyone at the sofa nodded their heads at the same time, slowly motioning slightly closer to Todoroki in expectation. He glanced at Bakugou’s busy-looking back and a gentle smile melted his stony expressionless away instantaneously. “It was cute.”

“Cute? What’s that supposed to mean?” asked Kaminari, a dumbstruck look on his face. “Did the dungeon brainwash you or something?”

“Cute how?” asked further Uraraka, deeply piqued by the unusual answer they obtained out of Todoroki. “Like, girly cute? Fluffy cute? Deadly cute? Nauseatingly cute?”

“Just cute. And fun,” said Todoroki with a shrug of his shoulders. “Really fun.”

“Wait, does this mean you two actually had a great time in the dungeon while we were nearly getting killed every other minute?” choked Kirishima, his eyes going round in shock. “Is that why Bakugou is being so salty about the dungeon? No traps, no monsters, no hardcore quizzes, no danger whatsoever?”

“Yeah,” acknowledged Todoroki, his casual answer hitting hard on the other dungeon escapees listening to the conversation. He added insult to injury by saying, “Just a door hidden behind a mirror, a small odd one out wax figure, 10 elementary school-level questions and a camouflaged key that unlocked the exit door.”

“I hate you two so much right now…” grudgingly grumbled Kaminari, sulkily crossing his arms over his chest. “The two top students from the hero course of a top-notch hero academy get the easy way out? Really!?”

“I now understand why Bakugou-kun didn’t want to talk about the dungeon…” groaned Uraraka, tiredly dropping her back against the sofa’s backrest. “Just hearing about that kind of dungeon makes me cringe… I mean, it’s a great thing that you didn’t go through a lot of hardships in there but then again… Bakugou-kun was probably dying to get some explosions out of it. Especially after holding back his Quirk for so long because of the heatwave.”

“If you put it like that, then Bakugou-chan was the one who suffered the most while stuck in the dungeon,” pointed out Asui, now starting to get a new perspective of the extremist’s Quirk. “Maybe the dungeon changes depending on the expectations of those stuck in it. A dungeon is supposed to be a hurdle adventurers need to overcome, right?”

“That does make sense,” acknowledged Yaoyorozu with a small nod of her head. She then proceeded by explaining her point of view on the matter. “Kirishima-san faced a very typical trap-based dungeon. He had to face all of the clichés usually associated with them. Uraraka-san and Tsuyu-chan experienced a more fantastical version of dungeons, focused on Greek mythology and its monsters. Kaminari-san had to overcome his intellectual difficulties under extreme pressure in a thriller movie kind of setting. But any of those things would have been too easy for Todoroki-san and Bakugou-san, especially if they were to work together. Maybe the extremist’s Quirk deemed them to be too hard to crush and tried to get them out as quickly as possible?”

“Oh yeah, that makes total sense!!” exclaimed Kirishima, perking up at hearing that rationalisation of the dungeon. “The first dungeon room was pretty basic and safe. My life only started being targeted from all directions when I moved to the next one!”

“That’s right!” also acknowledged Uraraka, Asui nodding her head too next to her. “Wow, that Quirk sure is a crafty one!”

If that’s how the extremist’s Quirk operates, then Bakugou is going to get so pissed at that guy for not taking him head-on and choose to evict us out through the easiest quest possible instead, inwardly chuckled Todoroki. *I’ll just calm him down by telling him we were the only ones the Quirk deemed too strong to face, even among the pro heroes at the exhibition’s site.*

“Wait!” suddenly said Mineta, an unusually dead serious expression on his face. “Does that mean… I’d have gotten my own harem for two whole days if I had gone with you guys!?”

“You’d probably have gotten a reverse harem,” snorted Sero, rolling his eyes around. “Testosterone anywhere you looked at, ahahaha!”

“Oh, that Quirk is truly pure evil,” grumbled Mineta, a shudder going down his spine. As he leaned back on the sofa, he scoffed, “Well, even if he didn’t have the courage to face both of them at the same time, he still did a pretty good job at trolling Bakugou for a while.”

“Someone sure seems to want to experience castration a second time,” hissed Bakugou, standing behind the sofa, right next to Mineta, with two plates on his hands. He walked around the sofa and placed the plates on top of the low table, always keeping his murderous gaze on the grape-shaped midget. “You better sleep with an eye open for the next couple of years.”

“Yay! Food!” happily yelped Kaminari, readily motioning his hand towards the chopsticks left next to the small mound of soba noodles. “I’m so hungry right now I could eat a whole cow!”

“Who said it’s for you?” growled Bakugou and Todoroki at the same time as they both grabbed Kaminari’s arm and prevented it from stealing the food. Between Bakugou’s demonic semblance and Todoroki’s cold warning gaze, it was hard to tell which one would rip that arm off faster.

“Sorry…” apologised Kaminari, immediately withdrawing his arm to the safety of his own embrace.

“Move,” ordered Bakugou, giving a quick jerk with his chin to urge Kaminari to get up from his seat and go take a hike somewhere else. Once the spot he was pining for was emptied, he dropped his body next to Todoroki and leisurely started eating the spicy stir-fry he had cooked for his dinner.

“Thanks,” said Todoroki, picking up the soba plate and readily digging in. Bakugou’s home-cooked meals truly were worth their weight in gold.

“What’s this, Bakugou?” said Sero, an amused half-smirk on his lips as he saw his two classmates eating their dinner without a care about the rest of the starving teens in the room. “Did you just cook dinner for someone who isn’t you?”

“What? Jealous much?” snorted Bakugou in between bites of the stir-fry. “I’m a man of honour. I always pay my debts, for as annoying as they may be.”

“Hell yeah, we’re jealous!” confessed Kirishima, a certain bitterness showing in his voice. “You have totally accepted Todoroki as your equal, haven’t you? Damn, I’m the closest friend you have around here and I have yet to eat anything you’ve cooked, except for the training

camp's failed group curry! That makes it just chopped potatoes and veggies! I need to train even more, become even harder and finally be acknowledged as a man by you!!"

"Yeah, dream on," said Bakugou with a roll of his eyes.

"How come you owe food to Todoroki-san?" asked Yaoyorozu, partially covering her mouth with her hands, such was the shock of witnessing yet another unusual scene happen inside of the dorm in less than a week.

"Long story short, he's one smooth opportunistic asshole…" grumbled Bakugou under his breath, shovelling more food to his mouth to prevent a blush from creeping out to his cheeks. At least he had the spicy food to blame if his face reddened more than it would have under normal circumstances.

He'd be a terrifying villain, inwardly concluded all of the onlookers. Todoroki simply continued slurping his cold soba in total silence as all eyes turned in his direction. *Who would have thought it's possible to put the Bakugou Katsuki in debt…?*

"Hey, whose tonight?" asked Bakugou as their classmates were occupied with the usual chit chatting or getting their own dinners ready. "Mine or yours?"

"Yours," said Todoroki, inwardly vibrating in excitement. He had just acquired one more night with his adorable sleepy koala, even though the high temperatures of the heatwave were now more resembling a regular summer night. "Your sleeping position gets too unruly when you sleep in a futon."

"I'm just not used to it…" grumbled Bakugou, sideways glaring at

Todoroki. He passed his empty plate to him and got up from the sofa. “You do the dishes. Later.”

“Sure,” acknowledged Todoroki. Much like told to, he also got up from the sofa and went to get the plates and the cooking utensils all washed up. It was starting to get quite hard to keep a straight face because that question had been the most adorable thing Todoroki had heard Bakugou say the whole day. No, the second most adorable - the way he had said yes when he asked him out topped the list any time. “Hehe…”

“You seem to be in a really good mood right now, Todoroki-kun,” noted Midoriya as he arrived at the kitchenette area and started getting his dinner ready. “Did you receive good news or something good happened today?”

“I guess,” said Todoroki, his hands busy rinsing the plates before he put them on the dishwasher.

“Bakugou cooked him dinner, of course he’s in a good mood,” scoffed Sero, also loading his plates to the dishwasher. “Anyone would be happy if they had eaten home-cooked food that rivals a 3 stars restaurant.”

“Kacchan cooked dinner for someone other than himself!?” yelped Midoriya, nearly dropping the tableware on the floor. He had a completely horrified expression on his face, his green eyes nearly jumping out of their sockets as he scanned Todoroki’s body from his head down to his feet. “A-Are you feeling okay, Todoroki-kun? He didn’t poison you or anything, right?”

“The cold soba was delicious,” deadpanned Todoroki with a thumbs up. Inwardly, however, he was lamenting the lack of trust Bakugou’s own childhood friend had in him. But given the conflicting

relationship the two of them had, well, it was self-explanatory why Midoriya had automatically concluded that Bakugou was plotting to severely food poison him - even Todoroki himself had the feeling Bakugou had considered doing it a couple of times already, even if just as a bluff. “Kaminari is already out of the dungeon.”

“Oh, yeah… I-I noticed it,” acknowledged Midoriya, his brain still trying to tell right from left. “I wonder what kind of dungeon he got? Ah, and speaking of which. What kind of dungeon did you and Kacchan get? I never got around to ask you that yesterday.”

“To Bakugou’s chagrin, it was more a first-person easy puzzle game than a dungeon,” said Todoroki, wiping his hands on a towel after finishing loading the dishes and cooking utensils in the dishwasher. “No traps, monsters or complicated questions. Yaoyorozu has theorised that the extremist’s Quirk wasn’t very compatible with us so the dungeon tried to get us out of there as quickly as possible by making it very easy to escape.”

“Does Kacchan know about that already?” asked Midoriya, jotting that information down in his brain so he could later add it to his hero study diaries. “He’ll be itching to challenge the extremist to a second-round the moment he finds out he got out of there easy because of Quirk incompatibility.”

“He doesn’t but I’ll let him know soon,” softly chuckled Todoroki, placing the towel down on the kitchen counter. After saying good night to his friends, he got on the elevator and left for the 5th floor. Following the recent trend, he’d better get everything ready for tomorrow’s classes before paying Bakugou a visit. Once the koala fell asleep, he wouldn’t be able to move from the bed until morning time.

“Um… Sero-kun, did Kacchan say anything about why he cooked dinner for Todoroki-kun?” asked Midoriya, still fazed by his childhood friend’s extremely unusual behaviour. Even though he has known Bakugou for nearly his whole life, Midoriya couldn’t find any

explanation or reason that would have led him into doing something so out of character.

"It seems Bakugou owes Todoroki some food," said Sero with a shrug of his shoulders. "I don't know why, though."

"Oh, I see," acknowledged Midoriya. He still continued thinking about the subject, however. In the last couple of days, he noticed that Bakugou had been acting in a slightly weird way but with a heatwave, sleep deprivation and an out of control Quirk riding on his shoulders, he couldn't blame him for it. But unusual circumstances or not, Midoriya still felt somewhat unsettled by the unknown that came associated with it. He muttered, "What's with Kacchan and Todoroki-kun lately…?"

"So you noticed it too, Midoriya-chan," said Asui, seemingly popping out next to Midoriya out of the blue - though it had just been Midoriya's focus on his own thoughts that had prevented him from noticing her rinsing her dishes.

"Eh?" interjected Midoriya, immediately turning his head to his right. "Noticed? Noticed what?"

"That they're dating?" said Asui in the shape of a question, her head slightly cocked.

"...They're what now…?" squeaked Midoriya, both air and voice getting stuck inside of his lungs. *Then… that phone call at lunchtime was Todoroki-kun asking about how to… with Kacchan… and they… that's why… the elevator… and the classroom… and the bathroom… and the dungeon… Ahhhhhh! I know too much now!! K-Kacchan is going to kill me!!*

Plates were broken at Heights Alliance that night.

Chapter 13

“WHAT!?” roared Bakugou, his mouth left hanging wide open as he looked at Todoroki in shock and indignation. Once the surprise faded slightly, he got up from the bed and readily started running off towards the bedroom’s door, his hands crackling in small explosions. “I’m gonna fuckin’ end that guy’s life! I crush any spineless moron that dares to mock me like that! Extremist, my ass! I’ll show him what a real extremist looks like because I’m about to end the career of all extremists worldwide!”

“No, you’re about to go take a nap,” deadpanned Todoroki, sidestepping to block Bakugou’s path. “Sleep over the matter and end the heatwave without more explosions. Ending with a bang is the last thing you want right now.”

“Screw the heatwave, that bastard is gonna fuckin’ get what he signed up for!” hissed Bakugou, loudly cracking his fingers as he pushed forward. “After he gets to personally taste how incompatible our Quirks really are, then I’ll sleep over the matter!”

“Fine. But I’m going back to my room for the day,” said Todoroki, allowing Bakugou to pass by him. “And I’m locking my door. You’ll have to sleep on your own.”

“…!” Bakugou immediately halted his exit at hearing those words, his hand a shy centimetre away from the doorknob. “I-I don’t care. I can sleep on my own just fine.”

“…” Todoroki silently continued glancing at Bakugou, his stony expressionless demeanour a perfect physical representation of ‘you’re not fooling anyone here’.

“Don’t think you can use this as a threat to stop me from bashing that guy’s face in,” babbled Bakugou, his trembling hand steadily growing closer and closer to the doorknob. “It won’t work! I’m telling you that it totally doesn’t work on me, you opportunistic asshole! I’m not falling for it!!”

“Let’s sleep,” sighed Todoroki, walking to the bed, taking a seat there and lightly patting the mattress to invite Bakugou closer.

“Damn it…” grumbled Bakugou under his breath. He crossed his arms over his chest and turned around on his heels, returning to the bed with a sulking frown on his features. He silently sat down next to Todoroki, his head turned the opposite way. When the silence started becoming a bit too suffocating for his taste, Bakugou slowly took a sideways peek at Todoroki. What he saw made him grumble once again. “Scheming bastard…”

“Sleeping early is important to you, right?” said Todoroki, gladly accepting Bakugou’s hug when he threw himself to his open arms. He gently ruffled his blonde hair, his hand lingering there afterwards. “Ignore the extras and give me some attention, as you’d usually say.”

Damn it, what’s with this?, inwardly mumbled Bakugou, allowing himself to be spoiled by Todoroki’s cuddling. Rather, he wanted to be spoiled and cuddled even more. *This is not how it’s supposed to go! What the heck has this guy done to me in a couple of days!? And why did I even go along with all of that shit and accepted to go out with him!? This is almost as if I’m disgustingly head over heels in…… HAH!?*

“Urgh!” groaned Todoroki when a hand was suddenly slapped across his face and then left there to grip at it. “Bakugou?”

What? WHAT!?, inwardly screamed Bakugou, too busy with his flustered thoughts to hear Todoroki calling for him. *Me? In love? With*

Half-and-Half Bastard? With this opportunist asshole? Hah, no way…… No way, right? Yeah, definitely not. Probably. Maybe. …Am I?

"Bakugou?" tried calling Todoroki once again, tilting his head slightly as he peeked at Bakugou from in between his fingers. "Hello?"

Meh, who cares?, dismissed Bakugou in the back of his mind, slowly sliding his hand out of Todoroki's face. *It's convenient to be in love with this blockhead of a portable thermostat.*

"Let's sleep," sighed Bakugou this time, dropping his body sideways to the bed. He ever so softly tugged at Todoroki's clothes. "Hurry up and lie down too. I'm turning off the lights."

"Okay?" acknowledged Todoroki, still wondering what had happened with Bakugou for him to suddenly grab his face like that. He climbed over Bakugou and laid down in the usual position, leisurely offering him his right arm for grabs. Bakugou was still in koala mode so he tightly hugged his arm without missing a beat. "By the way. I'm not charging more soba from now onwards."

"I wouldn't add any more plates of cold soba to my debt even if you begged me to," scoffed Bakugou, rolling his eyes around as he shifted his position around to find the right spot against Todoroki. "Thirteen more plates and I'm not cooking cold soba again for the rest of my life."

"Eh? No way," said Todoroki, lifting his head from the bed to gawk at Bakugou more easily as he snuggled against his arm and chest. "The soba you cook is better than the restaurant's…"

"Of course it is, I'm the one who cooked it," laughed Bakugou, a

mischievous smirk slowly tugging at the corner of his lips. Todoroki might have gotten hold of a certain weakness of his but Bakugou had also managed to hide a couple of cards up his sleeve. He lifted his upper body from the bed and placed his elbows on top of Todoroki's chest, looking down on him with a smug expression. "You get to taste what's best in this world and then it's cut off cold turkey. It sure sucks to be you."

"You're awful, Bakugou," pouted Todoroki, his cheeks getting slightly puffed out. "How can you be this cruel to your boyfriend? I shouldn't have been so nice to you and charge you an unlimited amount of cold soba instead."

"Go on, sulk even harder," teased Bakugou, gently pinching one of Todoroki's puffing cheeks. "No amount of begging or puppy eyes will make me change my mind."

"Please?" asked Todoroki, placing his arm around Bakugou's lower back to pull him closer. "Your soba is the best in the world, Bakugou. Give me some more?"

"Nope, sweet-talking me won't take you anywhere either," denied Bakugou, leaning over for a kiss. If he could so easily kiss Todoroki, then he really must have fallen in love with him - his priority had always been becoming the number one pro hero, romance and other useless relationships had been at the bottom of the list since before he knew the word 'love'. He chuckled, "But maybe it's not that bad…"

"Cooking soba?" asked Todoroki, the glint in his eyes perking up in hopeful delight at hearing that gentle laugh.

"You," snorted Bakugou, going for another kiss. It lasted longer than the previous one, with both of their lips seeking one another when he pulled his head back.

“I don’t think it’d be a good idea to cook me,” deadpanned Todoroki, adding his other hand to Bakugou’s body and cupping the side of his face with it.

“For fuck’s sake, you’re denser than a wall,” groaned Bakugou, rolling his eyes around once again. Before he could start admonishing Todoroki on the importance of language nuances and how much he needed to learn to get a freaking clue already, the hand on his cheek pulled him in for another long kiss - breathtakingly so.

Unlike the slight body temperature difference between his right and left side, all of Todoroki’s tongue was hot. And so moist, as their tongues pleasurably rubbed against one another. AC turned on to the max and colder right side closely pressed against his body couldn’t help Bakugou dealing with this smouldering heat.

He sought more of it nevertheless.

“Nngh…” half moaned Bakugou, his spine tingling in titillation as Todoroki’s hand slid up his back. A gentle push was enough to get their bodies rolling over the bed and reverse their positions - it was also enough to get Bakugou to fall off of the single size bed. “Argh!!”

“Are you okay, Bakugou?” asked Todoroki, peeking at the floor from on top of the bed.

“I’m gonna fuckin’ kill you, Todoroki!” roared Bakugou, lunging his hands forward and grabbing at Todoroki’s upper clothes. He put all of his strength and frustrations on yanking him out of the mattress and onto the floor; hence, more tumbling echoed inside of the dark bedroom. He sat down on top of him and grabbed him by the collar of his shirt. “Now listen here, you little shit! The next time you throw me

out of my own fuckin' bed or make me fall in any way or shape, I swear to god I'll be chaining you up to the bed so you can't move a single inch. Are we clear!?"

"So I can't make you fall in love with me?" asked Todoroki, a small smirk lightly tilting the corner of his lips upwards.

"Ugh…!" Bakugou thanked the heavens the room was as dark as night allowed it because he could have sworn his whole face had turned the brightest shade of red humanity had ever seen. It wouldn't be an overstatement to say that clouds of steam could shoot out of his ears any moment now. "Y-You're supposed to be as dumb as a doorknob when it comes to this kind of shit! What the fuck are you saying all of a sudden!?"

"I'm a quick learner," said Todoroki with a shrug of his shoulders. The way Bakugou gut-punched him in pure embarrassment was as endearing and cute as it was painful.

"Then learn how not to cockblock yourself first, you moron!" hissed Bakugou, angrily stomping back to his bed. Despite the sizzling temperature of his body, he covered himself from head to toes underneath the bedsheets. "Hurry up and get your ass back in bed!"

"You're so cute, Bakugou," chuckled Todoroki, picking himself up from the floor so he could reach the end of the bed. He then wiggled his way underneath the bedsheets to return to Bakugou the coldness of his skin he relished so much on. Both of them were definitely in need to cool down a little bit so his icy Quirk would need to come into play for a while. "You're cute in the bedroom but you look so cool when you're cooking my cold soba."

"I'm so gonna choke you to death one of these days…!!" roared Bakugou, grudgingly burying his blushing face on Todoroki's upper

arm.

Unlike the previous nights, it took Bakugou a while to fall asleep.

Chapter 14

“Hey, jackass! Wake up!” called Bakugou as he finished dressing the jacket of his school uniform. “And do it fast, before I kick you on your gut again.”

“I’m awake…” softly groaned Todoroki, his body sluggishly turning around on the bed before he started pushing it upwards to a sitting position. “No need for kicks or punches…”

“Pity,” grumbled Bakugou with a click of his tongue. Getting to hit Todoroki in some sort of way would have been the perfect revenge for the bed fall from the previous night. He might have to consider going about it in a different way. He grabbed his school bag and went to the bed, grabbing the still sleepy Todoroki by the arm to urge him to move. “C’mon, it’s time for you to go back to your room and get ready for school.”

“I should have brought my school uniform with me last night…” mumbled Todoroki, letting himself be dragged to the bedroom’s door. “I should do that tonight… Or you can sleep in my room tonight… No bed falls there…”

“Huh? Are you still dreaming or something?” asked Bakugou, a small frown on his brows as he started opening his bedroom’s door and dragging Todoroki outside together with him. “The heatwave has ended. Why would I continue sleeping with you?”

“But we’re dati-” pointed out Todoroki, his brain fully waking up right away at hearing those sad, so very sad news. However, the sound of a door opening and a cheerful greeting forced him to cut his words short.

"'Morning, Bakugou!!" said Kirishima, happily lifting his hand as a greeting. When he noticed it wasn't just Bakugou in the corridor, he tilted his head slightly. "And Todoroki too, I guess? Why are you on the 4th floor this early in the morning?"

"He just came to ask me something," explained Bakugou, closing his bedroom's door and leisurely walking towards Kirishima and the elevator. "The answer is no. There's no need for it anymore, is there? But if you come up with a good enough reason, I'm up to hear it out and crush it before your very eyes."

Right… He's been acting so cute in front of me lately that I ended up forgetting he's this kind of person…, inwardly sighed Todoroki, his shoulders slumping down in disappointment. Well, down the drain went his belief that dating meant exclusive access rights to each other's beds. He silently walked towards the elevator and stepped inside together with Bakugou and Kirishima, nearly no energy left to press the button to his floor. *Dating Bakugou is harder than I expected…*

"I'll see you downstairs…" sighed Todoroki, lifelessly exiting the elevator once it reached the 5th floor. He released another tired sigh as he side glanced at the elevator's door closing and leaving for the ground floor.

"Pffft!" snorted Bakugou as soon as the elevator started going down. What exactly had been that just now? Todoroki's perpetual stoic expression had completely crumbled at being denied of sleeping with him that night too - Bakugou couldn't quite put his finger on it but that had been a pretty interesting sight to behold. Opposite to what he had thought the previous night, maybe he was the one with the upper hand after all. "Hehe…"

"What got you laughing like a first-rate villain so early today?" asked Kirishima, an eyebrow slightly arched as he observed the outright sadistic smirk on Bakugou's lips. "Oh! Is it because the heatwave has ended? Is your Quirk back to normal now?"

“Yeah, it couldn’t be better,” said Bakugou, leaning his back on the elevator’s wall. “So you don’t need to worry about having your bedroom’s wall suddenly demolished by an explosion anymore.”

“I actually have been more worried about your physical and mental condition than about my own safety at the dorm,” confessed Kirishima, a bashful grin on his face as he scratched the back of his head. “I mean, I’m hard enough to survive one of your massive accidental explosions but you wouldn’t take a blunder like that very well.”

“As if I’d lose control of my Quirk until it reached that point,” scoffed Bakugou, lightly kicking Kirishima’s shin on his way out of the elevator and into the communal area on the ground floor. “I’ve dealt with heatwaves before without destroying anything. And now I just have to do exactly what Aizawa-sensei told me to. Find new methods to keep my overpowered Quirk under control anytime there’s extreme weather fucking up everybody’s lives.”

“Yeah, apart from exploding with your bedroom, half-blinding Midoriya and then trying to send us to an early grave after we escaped the dungeon, you have been able to keep your explosions to a minimum,” noted Kirishima, nodding his head a couple of times as he followed after Bakugou to the kitchen area. “Actually, I think I’ve seen less of your explosions and flashy crackling during the entire heatwave than on a regular day. Did you come up with a good containment method or something already?”

“I guess,” said Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. He grabbed the needed plates and cutlery for breakfast and walked up to the rice cooker. “Move it, Shitty Nerd.”

“K-Kacchan…!” squeaked Midoriya, his body flinching from head to toes. He hurriedly put down the ladle he was going to use to scoop up

some rice into his bowl and took a couple of steps away from the kitchen counter. His face was a mixture of fluster and alarm. “I-I know nothing! I swear I know nothing!!”

“Geez, stop being so damn creepy so early in the morning…” groaned Bakugou, frowning and glancing at Midoriya in pure disgust. “You’re gonna make me lose my appetite.”

“Says the one who was creepily laughing in the elevator…” sighed Kirishima, rolling his eyes around as he got in line to also pile up some rice for his breakfast.

“Come again?” hissed Bakugou, throwing the stink eye at Kirishima. When Kirishima just leisurely looked the other way, pretending to not have said anything, he scoffed. “Yeah, I thought so.”

“Good morning to you two. How does it feel to be a free man once again, Bakugou?” said Sero upon Bakugou’s and Kirishima’s arrival at the dining table with their breakfasts. “It’s wonderfully bleak and cloudy today, with some probability of thunderstorms throughout the day, just like with your mood.”

“Better not run around in circles waiting for the thunder to fall on your head then, Flat Face,” warned Bakugou, taking the seat opposite to Sero. He pointed with his thumb to the classmate seating in front of him on his right. “You don’t want to be named Dunce Face, the second.”

“Huff… Even I felt that one,” snorted Jirou, inwardly laughing at the indirect jab Bakugou had thrown at Kaminari. It was pretty pitiful and funny how Kaminari was the only one who didn’t seem to get it - then again, it was also the expected.

“But wouldn’t it be confusing if you went around calling both Sero and I Dunce Faces?” asked Kaminari, biting at the tips of his chopsticks as he wondered about what kind of disastrous messes that could cause within school grounds. “You should come up with a better name, Bakugou!”

“When will you guys stop celebrating my inability to blow up with you without an excuse?” groaned Bakugou, rolling his eyes around at his friends’ bantering. He heard a ‘don’t ignore me!’ but he might as well not have heard it at all, for all he cared. “Because I can and I will, if I feel like it. Shitty Deku over there knows that better than anyone.”

Regrettably so, inwardly cringed Midoriya, quickly averting Bakugou’s gaze once again. Now he could say with 100% of certainty that his dorm life was doomed into failure. Forget accidentally angering or annoying Bakugou during hero training classes and exercises, what he needed to be extremely careful about now was the maybe-true-maybe-teenage-overthinking information he acquired from Asui and his own observations. *What exactly am I supposed to do if it’s really true that one of my closest friends is dating my bully childhood friend?*

“Good morning, Midoriya,” greeted Todoroki, completely unsuspecting of the carousel of panicky thoughts about him and Bakugou spiralling round and round in Midoriya’s brain. He started gathering his tableware and cutlery on a tray, opening the upper cupboard to take a rice bowl. As he did so, he noticed that Midoriya’s plates were yet to see any food whatsoever. “You’re not going to eat breakfast?”

“Ah, yeah! Yeah, I will,” acknowledged Midoriya, hurriedly going to the rice cooker once again. “I just got… slightly distracted.”

“But now more seriously, it’s great your Quirk is under control once again,” laughed Sero, nibbling at some of his grilled salmon before adding, “Now you can go back to sleep like a baby without concerning yourself with your sweaty nitroglycerin blowing up with your

bedroom."

"Yeah, now my biggest concern is which side of the bed is safer to sleep on," snorted Bakugou, quickly taking a peek at the kitchen counter's direction.

"Ow!" softly yelped Todoroki, bumping his forehead on the cupboard's door he had forgotten open. He glanced sideways at the dining table, where he spotted Bakugou shrugging his shoulders at him with a satisfied smirk on his lips. *So he's still angry at me for accidentally pushing him out of the bed…*

"Are you okay there, Todoroki-kun?" asked Midoriya, observing Todoroki lightly massaging his forehead with the pads of his fingers. He finally finished putting rice on his bowl and made way for his friend to also serve himself.

"I think I got a bit distracted too," deadpanned Todoroki, taking up Midoriya's offer and serving himself some of the remaining rice in the rice cooker.

"I-I see," acknowledged Midoriya with a certain hesitation. After glancing between Todoroki and Bakugou for a couple of seconds, he finally lowered his gaze to his food as he walked towards the dining table with Todoroki. Inwardly, however, he wasn't as silent. *Well, hello there. That's an expression I've never seen Todoroki-kun doing AND an expression that I haven't seen Kacchan doing since he went from coolest kid in the neighbourhood to evil incarnate in a child's body…*

-.-

But does that mean they're really dating, though?, wondered Midoriya in the back of his mind, his eyes stuck to the back of the classmate sitting

in front of him.

As far as Midoriya was aware, Bakugou labelled everyone around him under three distinct categories: the extras he couldn't care less about, those that he hated - which ranged from constant mild annoyance at them to outright suicide goading - and the selected few he acknowledged as friends or viewed as family due to blood ties. If he were to try to fit Todoroki in one of those categories, he would have chosen the second one. It was hard to get the two of them talking with each other without Bakugou trying to rip his throat out with his teeth, possibly because of Todoroki's inability to read the mood. Midoriya also had the feeling Bakugou was keeping the grudge he had against Todoroki for the final match on the U.A. Sports Festival under lock and key, so he could use and abuse it in a future one-on-one match against him. Bakugou was that petty when it came to his pride.

For Todoroki's side of the spectrum, he usually had hardly anything to do with Bakugou. They had no close friends in common and most of their interactions had come about due to schoolwork or communal life in the same dorm. That was it.

Then when was it that they started to get closer to one another?, pondered Midoriya, putting his elbows on top of his desk and letting his chin rest on top of his hands as his stare intensified even further on the back of Bakugou's head. *If I were to give it a concrete date… it'd be the day Kacchan exploded with his bedroom because of the heatwave.*

Todoroki had been one of the three chosen to safely defrost Bakugou's hands (after he put them in a block of ice himself) and Aizawa had left him in charge of taking Bakugou to the infirmary to be observed by Recovery Girl. The two of them only returned during lunch break, having missed all of their morning classes. Todoroki had admitted he had been looking after Bakugou in the infirmary but what exactly consisted of 'looking after'?

Midoriya noticed Todoroki occasionally vanishing from them

onwards, especially during the late evening. Todoroki had also stepped forward to assist Bakugou when he started losing his mind in the classroom, easily dragging him to the chemistry lab without any major fuss from Bakugou's side - something Midoriya had thought so very out of character to someone who refused to accept any helping hand, whoever it belonged to. Was it so Todoroki could provide Bakugou with the same 'looking after' from the previous infirmary visit?

And then the hero exhibition visit. Under normal circumstances, Bakugou would never - **never** - go anywhere together with Midoriya, or in a group which Midoriya was a part of, if he had the option not to. But he went. Again, without any major fuss from his side. Actually, Bakugou had even been pretty tame with his usual verbal abuse that day. It could have been out of exhaustion caused by the high temperatures of the heatwave but… Todoroki's sudden disappearances had also taken place throughout the visit. Once when Bakugou dragged him away to the bathroom in the train station and another just before they got stuck in the dungeon. Midoriya didn't know who took the other there but Todoroki and Bakugou somehow ended up in the bathroom together again.

The information he possessed from there on was a large blank, with him stuck inside of a Quirk-created dungeon filled with the most diverse monsters from Greek mythology. But thanks to Aizawa, he knew Bakugou and Todoroki had been the first ones to exit the dungeon and had mutually decided to hang around Shinjuku until the rest of their classmates got out. And thanks to Kirishima, he knew they had spent the day at a park so they could shield themselves from the heat and sun while waiting for them… and that Bakugou had fallen asleep next to Todoroki…

"Oh…" interjected Midoriya, that small gasp escaping his vocal cords outwardly. That was it! To keep Bakugou from overheating or sweating too much nitroglycerin, Todoroki must have been using his ice Quirk to refresh his surroundings, maybe even physically so. One of the major causes of Bakugou exploding with his bedroom had been sleep deprivation so every time Todoroki disappeared during the late evening was because he was spending the night with Bakugou to help

him cool down and sleep - hence the origin of that unexpected question he asked him during the phone call.

No, wait a moment…!, inwardly gasped Midoriya, his eyes going round in shock. *He asked me how to continue sleeping with someone yesterday, right? Yesterday was the last day of the heatwave. Kacchan's Quirk is back to normal now, there shouldn't be any need for them to continue sleeping in the same bed. And yet Todoroki-kun wants to continue sleeping with Kacchan…!? Anyway, Todoroki-kun and his lack of societal awareness aside, Kacchan agreed with that!? Kacchan accepted to share the bed with someone he has a grudge against? Was he that desperate for sleep? Or am I still missing some sort of piece in this insane romantic plot? It's weird that Kacchan accepted Todoroki-kun's help so easily. Was there something other than despair that made it easier for him to concede to it? Ohhh! The debt! The food debt! For as messed up as it may sound, getting in Todoroki-kun's debt might have made it easier for Kacchan to accept his help since it would involve a countable display of gratitude for it afterwards!*

"I'm a genius…" muttered Midoriya as he dropped his hands on the desk's surface. A third of a second after, he was being hit square on the face with a piece of chalk. "Buwahh!"

"You really must be a genius, if you're not even trying to pretend to pay attention to my class," said Aizawa, his eyes a thin slit on his face as he glared at Midoriya. "No one is allowed to tell Midoriya the announcement I just made. Since he's a genius, he'll be able to figure it out on his own."

"Yes, Sir…" mumbled the class in unison.

"One last thing before the lunch break starts," said Aizawa, his gaze shifting to the student sitting in front of the one he had just admonished. "Bakugou, the repairs to your bedroom have been completed. You can move back in. Come return the key to the room you've been using to me once you're done. And don't explode with

your room again, heatwave excuse or not. Principal Nezu was kind enough to give the AC in that room a considerable boost in quality and efficiency so use it wisely."

"Yeah, yeah, I know," dismissed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes.

"Change to your gym clothes for the afternoon classes and go to the TDL gym," finished Aizawa just as the bell rang.

"Was Aizawa-sensei's announcement related to today's afternoon classes?" inquired Midoriya once Iida and Uraraka surrounded his desk.

"No, I don't think you'll need to worry about that announcement until next week…" nervously laughed Uraraka, averting looking straight at Midoriya's eyes. "None of us needs to worry about it until next week…"

"Uraraka, you're disclosing too much information to Midoriya," warned Iida, motioning his arm forward and putting it between his two classmates to physically block the conversation. "Aizawa-sensei said he'll have to figure it out on his own. And so do we. Just because he doesn't know as much as us, it doesn't change the fact that we have a lot of thinking to do too."

"Now I'm getting a bit nervous…" mumbled Midoriya, quickly scanning around the classroom with his eyes. Though there was a whiff of tension in the rest of his classmates, most of it was topped up with intense enthusiasm and excitement. Seeing that, his first thoughts about Aizawa's announcement is that next week they'll have another major hero training exercise, maybe an examination of some sort even.

“Shall we go have lunch in the cafeteria?” asked Todoroki as soon as he joined the group by Midoriya’s desk.

“What will you be having today, Todoroki-kun?” inquired Uraraka with a sing-song voice as they exited the classroom and walked towards Lunch Rush Cafeteria.

“Cold soba,” said Todoroki right away, not even a second spent in consideration towards the dozens of other dishes and lunch menus available at the school’s food court.

“I knew it!” laughed Uraraka, shifting her attention to her other two classmates. “I bet it’ll be katsudon and beef stew for Deku-kun and Iida-kun, respectively, once again too!”

“How did you guess?” asked Iida, the eyebrow getting slightly perked up on his brows erupting even more laughter out of Uraraka.

“Hey, Todoroki-kun…” called Midoriya, his eyes jumping around the corridor as he tried to figure out a good way to make that question. “Um… So, about your phone call yesterday… Did you end up reaching some sort of answer to that question you made me?”

“Oh, that.” After briefly thinking about Midoriya’s question, mainly over the fact if he should give him an accurate answer or try to run away from the subject, Todoroki said, “I asked them out. But then they said no this morning when I told them I intended to continue sleeping with them.”

Kacchan said no to the sleeping together part but what about the dating part? What about the dating part, Todoroki-kun!?, inwardly bellowed Midoriya, the unknown behind the most fundamental part of the schematized romantic plot in his brain causing a weird button to be

switched on inside of him. After spending the whole night and morning deep in thought about the true relationship between his friend and his childhood bully, Midoriya just had to know if they were in fact dating or if it was just supposition created by misread signals. He softly cleared his throat and then asked further, “Right… Was it because something went wrong when you asked them out?”

“No, that part went okay,” explained Todoroki, a small smile briefly crossing his lips upon remembering Bakugou’s bitter-sweet roundabout answer. The smile went away quickly, however, as he also ended up remembering the bed-sharing ban. He mumbled under his breath, “It’s definitely because I accidentally pushed him out of the bed…”

YES! They’re dating!!, inwardly acclaimed Midoriya, one of his hands tightening with a celebratory fist. His excitement wasn’t to last, though, especially once he started to realise all of the implications behind it. *Oh no… They’re actually dating... That means Kacchan will really try to kill me if he finds out I know he and Todoroki-kun are going out! Ahhh! My life is over…*

And if Midoriya’s life was about to meet its end very shortly, then he concluded that he might as well go the whole mile and get to the crux of the romantic plot. If he was going to be killed, then he wanted to die knowing why.

“Um… I hope you don’t mind me asking this but…” said Midoriya, gulping down hard in dry. “What exactly made you… um… like, I guess… that person?”

Out of everybody Midoriya knew in his life, Bakugou was the one person he found impossible to be dating material. Maybe it was the resentment and anguish caused by a whole life of bullying talking, but he simply couldn’t imagine his childhood friend finding someone that could come to love and care for his messed up personality. He was brash, egocentric, sharp-tongued in the most abusive and violent way

possible, and with more evil than good in his heart, despite aiming to become a pro hero. If those were the sort of traits someone searched for in a partner, then the psychiatric ward of a high-security prison would have less potential love interests.

"Hm… How cute they actually can be while around me… I guess," confessed Todoroki, the same small smile of before popping out on his face. When he noticed the flabbergasted expression on Midoriya's face, a portion of it being brought forward out of incomprehension, he shrugged his shoulders. "It's okay if you don't understand. Actually, it's a good thing you don't understand. It'd be bad if everybody got to see that side of his…"

When it came to Bakugou's endearing sides, seeing was believing. Todoroki had absolutely no problem with being thought of as insane or a liar if it meant keeping that koala stuck to a single tree forever.

Chapter 15

“Haaa…! I’m exhausted!” groaned Ashido, stretching her arms over her head as she dropped her tired body on the sofa. “I wasn’t expecting the preparation exercises for the test to be like that…”

“Yeah, I never thought a combat battle royale between heroes-in-training could be a thing,” acknowledged Sero with a sigh. “Aizawa-sensei really isn’t pulling any punches this time around…”

“When exactly has he not pulled any punches so far…?” pointed out Kaminari, getting some relaxation time in front of the TV. A shudder ran down his spine at recalling his terrifying weekend misadventure. “Besides, it’s better that he leads us into figuring out what our test will be like rather than having it suddenly dropped on us without any preparation…”

“You didn’t end up in the same group as Bakugou today, you have no right to talk about this battle royale training being good or bad…” sobbed Mineta with a muffled voice, lying on the sofa face down. “He blew up with me, Kouda, Hagakure and Ojiro in less than fifteen minutes… How exactly am I supposed to figure out the theme of my test with a fifteen-minutes slaughter…?”

“You just had bad luck with today’s groups and coincidentally ended up in the same one as our resident ferocious beast,” laughed Ashido, lightly patting Mineta’s head - she quickly withdrew her hand away, however, when the grape-shaped midget threw her one of those disgusting, sexual harassing thirsty looks of his. “Who knows who will be the four unlucky ones ending up in the same group as him tomorrow?”

“I think the same is applied to anyone who ends up in the same group as Todoroki or Midoriya…” sighed Sero once again. “Though it wasn’t

on the same ridiculous proportions as with Bakugou, Todoroki also didn't show me any mercy by turning me into a block of ice. Again… And then he leisurely went after Midoriya as if the most natural thing to do after they both got rid of the small fries around them…"

"Somehow… sorry about that, Sero-kun…" apologised Midoriya, awkwardly scratching his cheek. "And I also ended up losing against Todoroki-kun again so…"

"In the end, the four winners of today's battle royale exercises were the same top four from the sports festival," said Kaminari with a shrug of his shoulders. "I don't know if that's supposed to mean they continue to be the strongest ones in our class or if we're just as weak as we were months ago. Any commentary to give us, Iida?"

"It's a matter of luck, like Ashido said," explained Iida, quickly adjusting his glasses on the bridge of his nose. "The groups will be randomly selected tomorrow once again. There are better matchups than others. I'd also have trouble facing Todoroki once again if I were to be placed in the same group as him. But at least I have the sports festival match against him as a guideline and I can already start preparing counter-measures against him if I do."

"But even so, figuring out which one of our weaknesses will be addressed during next week's test will be a challenge," muttered Midoriya, once again diving into deep thinking. He might not have heard the announcement that Aizawa had made during the morning class but he eventually reached the conclusion they'd be tested on their ability to deal with one of their weaknesses once the battle royale exercise was explained. The purpose of the battle royale-style fights in groups of five was the key for both teachers and students to discover their current major flaws as heroes-in-training. "If I were Aizawa-sensei, I'd put me testing in an area where mobility is extremely restricted and try to push me into using my arms rather than my legs. While facing multiple enemies at once…"

“Midoriya, do a Quirk weakness analysis for me too…!!” whined Ashido, turning around on the sofa and leaning over the backrest so she could beckon for Midoriya’s help. “That way I can start preparing a strategy already too!”

“I-I don’t think… that would help you out much…” meekly said Midoriya, averting Ashido’s puppy eyes. “Not to mention, a pro hero might think your weaknesses are different from the ones I think will be the testing theme.”

“Geez, no fair!” pouted Ashido, her cheeks slightly puffed out as she sat straight on the sofa once again, her arms crossed over her chest. When she noticed the front door of the dorm opening and a classmate of theirs stepping inside, her pouting expression only became more noticeable. “Really, so not fair! Look at that, he even had enough energy to go out for a run after trashing his group!”

“Huh?” growled Bakugou, pushing his hoodie down and removing the earphones from his ears while stepping inside of the dorm. A frown creased his brows when he looked in the sofa’s direction and saw a small group of his classmates all staring at him. “What?”

“It sure is convenient to be born a war machine,” sighed Kaminari, shrugging his shoulders at the sight of Bakugou fresh out of his usual long runs. “What’s even the point of trying to compare ourselves to *that* ?”

“Yeah, none of you peasants will ever reach my level,” snorted Bakugou, lightly wiping the sweat running down the side of his face with his sleeve. “No matter how much effort you put forward, you’ll be down there and I’ll be up here. Be careful to not stare at such a steep sight for too long or you’ll eventually break your own fucking necks.”

“Smug asshole…” laughed Sero, rolling his eyes around. “It wouldn’t hurt you to be supportive of your classmates for once in your life. Since you’re so high up, how about sharing some of your wisdom with us peasants?”

“I just did,” said Bakugou, pressing the elevator’s button. Once the door opened, he went in and smugly glanced at his classmates, a condescending smirk present on his lips. “Aim too high and you’ll be shooting at thin air. Why don’t you first start shooting at each other’s faces before worrying about the ones already ready to snipe you out from above?”

Idiots, all of them…, sighed Bakugou in the back of his mind at hearing the loud blast of incredulous voices booming from the communal living room area even with the elevator already climbing up to the 4th floor. As he stepped outside of the elevator, he bumped into yet another one. “What are you doing here?”

“I was waiting for you,” said Todoroki, his back leaned against the door of Bakugou’s temporary room. “I already apologised for pushing you out of your bed last night. Why can’t we sleep together tonight too?”

“You sure are one hell of a stubborn moron…” grumbled Bakugou under his breath. He walked up to his room, pushing Todoroki out of the way before he unlocked the door and leisurely walked in.

“Why can’t we sleep together tonight too?” asked Todoroki once again, taking Bakugou’s lack of angry growls or a door slammed on his face as permission to follow him inside of the room.

“I heard you the first time!” roared Bakugou, angrily unzipping his training jacket and taking it off. “And I told you no already, haven’t I? There’s no reason for it anymore!”

“But we’re dating,” pointed out Todoroki, closely observing Bakugou as he undressed his sweaty clothes. “Sharing a bed is a lover’s privilege, isn’t it?”

“A privilege, not a fucking obligation!” hissed Bakugou, throwing his upper clothes straight at Todoroki’s face. He then hurriedly turned his back at him, proceeding with changing from his running clothes to his regular indoor clothes. “What do you even think dating is? Do you think every fucking couple out there in the world goes out of their way to visit each other’s room every single night so they can share the same damned bed!?”

“Ah…” interjected Todoroki, his whole body freezing instantly. Now that he thought about it from that point of view, it was indeed more common for those dating to sleep in separate beds than to share one - except if they lived together. “But we live in the same dorm? It’s just a floor away from one another. Unless it’s not a matter of not having a reason to do it but that you don’t like sleeping with me. As I thought, you really are angry about me pushing you out of the bed.”

“It’s not a matter of being angry or disliking it,” said Bakugou, picking up his shirt and starting to pull it over his head to clothe his naked torso. “I just don’t feel like sharing that tiny ass bed every single night with a moron prone into slamming me against the floor every time he tries to make a move on- Hiii!”

“Maybe your cute reactions are the reason why I’m so prone into making you fall,” deadpanned Todoroki, slowly sliding a finger down Bakugou’s exposed spine. It was hard to tell which shade of red was darker: Bakugou’s eyes or the blush on his cheeks.

“G-Go die a thousand deaths and then some fuckin’ more, you asshole!!” roared Bakugou, roundhouse kicking Todoroki on the side of his torso. He wasn’t counting on Todoroki guarding against his kick

and locking his leg in place between his ribcage and arm. “Wai- You’re supposed to take the hit like a fucking man!”

“I told you I’m a quick learner,” chuckled Todoroki, slowly releasing his hold on Bakugou’s leg. “If you don’t want to sleep in a small bed, you can always sleep in my room. You won’t need to worry about falling off of the bed there. Rather, I’ll be the one needing to keep an eye on you, in case you try to wrestle me while you’re sleeping.”

“Fine,” grumbled Bakugou, pulling his shirt fully down to not give Todoroki any more funny ideas. He was a quick learner? Then Bakugou wanted to see how quickly he’d be able to free himself of this next one. “You want to sleep together? Sure, let’s sleep together. But I don’t sleep with just any random lazy ass. Go fetch me this from the local grocery store.”

With that, Bakugou ripped a page from a notebook on top of his desk and quickly scribbled a couple of words in it. He folded it and walked over to Todoroki.

“If you buy all of this before I finish changing my stuff back to my usual bedroom, I’ll sleep with you,” said Bakugou, slapping the shopping list on Todoroki’s hand. When he was about to open the folded paper, he immediately stopped him. “Nope, no peeking until you get to the grocery store.”

“Do you hate sleeping with me this much?” asked Todoroki, his shoulders slumping down just the slightest. Why couldn’t Bakugou just make his life easier by giving him his okay like a normal person would?

“No, I like it, I really like it,” reassured Bakugou, trying to keep his mischievous smirk from leaking out. He turned Todoroki around and started pushing him out of the room. “I like it so much I’m even

willing to upgrade my soba cooking skills for it. Hurry it up or you won't have any debt payment for dinner tonight."

"Okay…" acknowledged Todoroki with a certain hesitation. Bakugou was now being suspiciously easy to compromise with and it was leaving him with the feeling he was about to be tricked into a lonely night - especially because he couldn't even check what the shopping list was. But then again, soba was soba and he definitely wanted to try an upgraded version of what he had been given the previous day.

After staring indecisively at Bakugou and the folded paper on his hand for a couple of seconds, Todoroki silently left for the elevator.

"Hehehe…" eerily laughed Bakugou, withdrawing back to his room. He quickly finished piling up the notebooks and textbooks on top of his desk, grabbed the clothes he had just changed out of and put them over a travel bag already filled with the rest of his clothes. Packing was now complete, all he needed to do was carry his belongings to his bedroom. "If karma's a bitch, then I'm a motherfuckin' whore."

Bakugou waited a couple of minutes before he started transporting his things to the bedroom two doors away on the same floor, just to make sure that Todoroki wouldn't get sneaky on him and had taken a peek at the list earlier than he was told to.

By the time Bakugou had finished neatly organising his bedroom to what it was before he exploded with it, there was yet to be any signs of Todoroki being back from shopping duty.

It's one hundred years too early for you to be toying around with me like that, you Half-and-Half Opportunistic Asshole, grumbled Bakugou in the back of his mind as he sideways glanced at his bed. *And it's one hundred years too early for me to pick up weird sleeping habits after only 24 hours of going out with someone…*

Such had been Bakugou's thoughts before realising he had already picked up weird sleeping habits a couple of hours later.

[Meanwhile, Todoroki…]

"I knew he had tricked me…" bitterly grumbled Todoroki as he exited the closest grocery store he could find around U.A. High School. He came outside empty-handed, just the folded paper with the words 'I told you I'd crush it before your very own eyes' written in it tucked next to his wallet.

Then again, this is so very much like Bakugou, inwardly noted Todoroki, his breath coming out in the shape of a small condensation cloud as he chuckled to himself. *The more I push, the harder he fights back. I might as well withdraw for a while and wait for him to take the initiative once again. I'm going to dislike the next couple of nights so much...*

Chapter 16

Sleep deprivation total: 24 hours

“Shit…” cursed Bakugou, his eyes already wide open as the sun slowly made its ascension into the early morning sky. He had eaten dinner with the sulking Todoroki and gone to bed at the same early hour as usual the previous day. He was even back to the bedroom he had been using since U.A. High School began its boarding school programme. However, something had gone terribly wrong that night. “Why can’t I fall asleep…?”

No matter how he looked at it, what Bakugou had just experienced throughout the whole night was the well-known ‘insomnia’. There hadn’t been a sizzling heatwave disturbing his Quirk, there hadn’t been noise or a commotion keeping him awake, there hadn’t even been endless concerns or thoughts spiralling inside of his brain - he had purely been unable to turn his sleeping gears into motion.

“I just wasn’t tired,” said Bakugou, trying to dismiss the whole situation by thinking of it as a simple coincidence. Everyone had some occasional nights where they couldn’t sleep, for that reason or this reason - especially during the teenage years, with so many hormonal changes going around inside of their bodies. “Yeah, I wasn’t tired. Just that.”

With that small nagging concern out of his mind, Bakugou got up from his bed and put on his school uniform. They’d be using their gym clothes during the continuation of the battle royale exercises in the afternoon so he also got that out of his to-do list while making time. Once it was a decent hour, he finally went down to eat breakfast.

The usual early birds like him were midway through their breakfasts while engaging in the same chattering of every morning. No Todoroki

around, for Bakugou's chagrin. For someone who was acting so desperate to share a bed with him the previous day, Todoroki sure seemed to be enjoying sleeping on his futon all alone.

He better get ready to be killed by me later, inwardly grumbled Bakugou, stomping his way to the kitchen area to serve himself some breakfast.

With such intentions in mind, Bakugou's day went by fast. Lack of sleep or not, he easily slew the theoretical classes in the morning, went for some spicy food for lunch in the cafeteria with Kirishima and Kaminari, and then utterly wrecked Asui, Aoyama, Shoji and Tokoyami on day 2 of the battle royale training exercises.

"Bakugou-chan, you're too merciless," admonished Asui during dinner time, taking a small peek at the dark aura floating around the depressed Tokoyami - a dark aura that had absolutely no connection to Dark Shadow with the exception of the nasty treatment it had received during the afternoon training. "Going after other's weaknesses like that is villain behaviour."

"It's kill or be killed in a battle royale, there's no space for mercy in that sort of battlefield," snorted Bakugou, a mischievous smirk on his lips as he finished eating his dinner. "Actually, Bird Face should be thankful I went out of my way to help him battle his weakness head-on."

"Tsuyu-chan, it's useless..." sighed Midoriya. Part of him understood what Bakugou was trying to say, seeing as light and brightness was the weak spot of Tokoyami's Quirk; but the bigger part of him also wanted to have enough guts to chastise his childhood friend for his torture-like ways of helping others. He really wanted to but he was already walking a tightrope as it was. Midoriya couldn't afford to take Bakugou's safety pin off and have him go ballistic on him right now. "Kacchan won't listen to any of that…"

“Why should I listen?” dismissed Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. Once he was done with dinner, he took his dishes back to the kitchen area, where he gave them a quick rinse before placing them inside of the dishwasher. He was already starting to feel the tiredness of being awake for two days in a row so rather than stick around the communal area for a while longer, he decided on getting back to his bedroom and going to bed even earlier than usual.

“You’re going to bed already?” asked Todoroki as he also washed the tableware he used for one more plate of wonderfully home-cooked soba.

“Yeah,” said Bakugou. Unintentional as it was, he ended up waiting for Todoroki to finish loading his dishes on the dishwasher and walked with him to the elevator. Clockwork body movements acquired through habit could be freaky as heck. “Wait, why are you following me!?”

“I need to finish my homework,” deadpanned Todoroki as he pressed the elevator button to the 5th floor. He then just casually stood next to Bakugou.

“Not done with them yet?” snorted Bakugou, rolling his eyes around at the stupid attempt of an excuse to follow him. He could already predict what Todoroki would say the moment the elevator stopped on his floor. He wouldn’t hear any of it, though. “See you tomorrow, then.”

“Bakugou.”

Told you so, inwardly laughed Bakugou as he stepped into the corridor. He turned slightly around and looked back to Todoroki, who was still half-inside of the elevator. “What? Mmh!”

“Good night,” said Todoroki, a small smile on his lips as he parted them from Bakugou’s. He fully returned inside of the elevator and pressed the button to close the doors, quickly arriving at the floor above afterwards.

“...” Bakugou remained stock-still in front of the elevator’s closed door, his mouth slightly open as he tried to figure out what the heck had just happened. He clicked his tongue in annoyance and turned around on his heels, sulkily stomping to his bedroom. He mumbled, “...I’ll kill him tomorrow…”

In his bedroom, Bakugou quickly put on his sleepwear and dived straight to bed. He got sleep business to settle and there was nothing that could stop that dispute from happening that night. He’d sleep. Alone. Like usual.

“Shit…!!” roared Bakugou, kicking off his bedsheets as he jumped to a sitting position on the mattress. He checked the time on his cell phone and he almost felt like throwing the electronic device against the wall at seeing that the date had already changed to the next day.

You gotta be fucking kidding me!, inwardly fussed Bakugou, slamming the cell phone back in place. No matter how much he tossed and turned in the bed, he couldn’t fall asleep. His brain was as tranquil as it could be, there was absolutely no noise in the vicinity and he felt his body tired from all the battling and moving around in the afternoon. *But I still can’t fucking fall asleep!!*

“I’m done with this shit,” grumbled Bakugou, getting out of his bed and immediately running off of his bedroom. With a short run, he stopped in front of the room next door to his and loudly banged his fist on it. “Hey, Kirishima! Wake the fuck up!!”

A couple of seconds later, an extremely sleepy Kirishima was opening his door. “...Bakugou?”

“Get hard for me for a sec there and hit me square on the face,” ordered Bakugou, a fuming red glare on his eyes as he stared down on the yawning Kirishima. “Knock me out fast and then drag me back to bed! Now!”

“...This is a really weird dream…” babbled Kirishima, sluggishly rubbing one of his eyes as he closed the door once again and returned to his bed.

“AAARGH!!” screeched Bakugou in utter frustration, his hands roughly ruffling his hair. He continued stomping through the corridor and slammed his fist on the elevator’s button. In the elevator, his eyes got momentarily stuck on the number 5 in the electronic panel but like hell he was that weak. He furiously pressed the button for the ground floor a couple of times. “If I can’t get knocked out, then I’m gonna run my lungs out until I crash down from exhaustion! You just wait, you fuckin’ Half-and-Half Bastard! I’ll show you I don’t need you to fall asleep, goddammit!!”

Sleep deprivation total: 48 hours

“FUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUCK!!” roared Bakugou against his pillow, birds happily chirping their morning songs right outside of his bedroom’s window. His eyes were bloodshot from the intense continuous mixture of anger outbursts and lack of sleep. After punching his mattress a couple of times, he pushed himself out of the bed. “This is not over yet! Don’t think you’ve won just yet, Todoroki! I can sleep! I’m gonna fucking sleep! Tonight, I’ll definitely sleep! You just fucking watch me!!”

And so a repeat of the previous day began. He frustratingly slew the

theoretical classes in the morning periods, nearly killed Kirishima during lunch break when he had the audacity to tell him he had had a really weird dream about Bakugou the previous night and then vented all of the accumulated frustration by blowing up with Kaminari, Iida, Uraraka and Yaoyorozu, and the training grounds alike.

Once all four battle royale exercises and classes were over, he used another extended run through U.A. High School and its neighbouring streets as an opportunity to shop for the materials he'd be needing to finally get his revenge sleep that night.

"Ah… Bakugou, you do know that kidnapping and incarceration are punishable by law, right?" asked Iida, an eyebrow slightly arched on his brows at witnessing Bakugou getting back to the dorm with a few metres of rope and rolls of duct tape on his hands.

"Want to make it just sociably frowned upon by volunteering to be the fucking victim, then!?" growled Bakugou, furiously throwing a quick glare at the classmates jaw-dropping at his return from a shopping trip to the local hardware store. He didn't even bother taking the elevator to the 4th floor, he went straight for the stairs - the more tired he could get, the easier it would be to fall asleep (supposedly).

"You're not gonna have dinner?" asked Kirishima before Bakugou could disappear from everyone's sight.

"Fuck dinner and FUCK YOU, YOU USELESS PIECE OF ROCK!" yelled Bakugou, running up the stairs at full speed.

Back in his bedroom, Bakugou took all of his clothes from his wardrobe and bundled them with the rope and duct tape into a long roll.

I just got used at grabbing onto something while sleeping, inwardly mumbled Bakugou, still trying to deny the weird sleeping habit he already developed despite his hasty attempts to cut the source off before it became the problem that it clearly was now. He tightly pulled the rope around the bundle of clothes, giving it a secure knot so that the make-shift body pillow wouldn't lose its shape throughout the night. *With this thing laid down next to me, I'll be able to sleep like a baby tonight. Hah! In your face, Todoroki! I win!*

Sleep deprivation total: 72 hours

"...I don't wanna be the whore anymore…" grudgingly mumbled Bakugou, his teeth gnawing at the make-shift body pillow as he hugged it into suffocation. He kicked the bundle of clothes out of his bed and slowly sat up on the mattress. He had to nearly drag himself out of his sleepwear and into his school uniform.

Once downstairs in the communal area, rather than go get his breakfast like usual, he went straight for the table and let his upper body slump down on it.

"Kirishima… Go get my breakfast…" ordered Bakugou with a mumble, turning his face against the table to look at the classmate sitting next to him.

"Are you okay, Bakugou?" asked Kirishima, halting his eating right away upon seeing Bakugou's half-dead arrival. If he knew better than that, his friend almost looked like… "Are you having trouble sleeping once again? But the heatwave has already ended?"

"Do it or I'll kill you!" hissed Bakugou, strongly kicking the chair Kirishima was using.

“Okay, okay! Just chill out before you burst a vein or worse!” hurriedly said Kirishima, putting down his chopsticks on his tray and starting to get up from the dining table. But before he could even depart that location, a tray slid on the table towards Bakugou.

“Here,” offered Todoroki, giving his still untouched breakfast to Bakugou. He then placed his hand on top of Bakugou’s head and gently ruffled his blonde hair. “Are you okay?”

“Ngh… I’m perfectly fine!” barked Bakugou, pushing Todoroki’s hand out of his head before straightening his sitting position. He sluggishly picked up the chopsticks and slowly started munching on some rice.

“Kacchan, are you okay!?” yelped Midoriya, nearly dropping his tray at the sight of Bakugou seemingly nearly dying by the roadside. “Like, seriously… Are you okay?”

“Die, Shitty Nerd!!!!” roared Bakugou, grabbing his rice bowl and shoving it straight on Midoriya’s face.

Unlike the previous days, breakfast time was spent trying to keep Bakugou from slaughtering anyone who asked the million-dollar question. He slammed his face with all the weight of gravity riding on top of his head two times throughout the theoretical classes and lunch break was another tense repeat of breakfast, with Kirishima and Kaminari patiently looking after Bakugou and preventing him from dropping his food all over the cafeteria.

It was a very weird day for everyone in Class 1-A, as they kept Bakugou’s murderous intent at bay as much as physically possible. Only Todoroki seemed to be taking the occasional verbal blasts calmly. He had spent the last couple of days silently looking after Bakugou and his slow descent into sleep deprivation madness from the sidelines - a role which was thankfully reaching its conclusion at the

same time as the cranky koala reached the end of his rope.

Maybe it hadn't been as bad as it was for Bakugou, but Todoroki's days and nights also hadn't been the best lately. It was painful to see Bakugou go into murderous mode out of sleep deprivation once again when they both knew which was the best cure for it. But Todoroki knew that if he intervened too soon, Bakugou would just keep repeating the same sleep together-get sleep deprived-sleep together cycle. Getting Bakugou to realise the same thing now would save them from a lot of struggling and suffering down the road.

And so, with such danger alerts wafting around the hero program class, the 4th session of battle royale exercises began.

"I can already foresee the training grounds Cementoss created getting destroyed once again so team 3 can go first today to save us on the reconstruction time," instructed Aizawa with a monotone voice, inwardly sighing at the catastrophic student placement of that day's battle royales. "Midoriya, Bakugou, Todoroki, Kirishima, Mineta, you can start whenever you're ready."

"C-Can I withdraw…?" fearfully asked Mineta, his hand stretched out towards their teacher as he abandoned the training grounds for the observation area. He gulped down hard in dry. "I… I'm going to be killed…"

"No hard feelings, okay, Mineta?" said Kirishima, no hesitation as he swung his hardened fist at Mineta's small body. The grape-shaped midget was sent flying out of the training grounds to the observation area - much like he had requested, just not in the safest of ways.

"DIE, SHITTY NERD!!" roared Bakugou, taking off from the ground with a pair of explosions from the palm of his hands. "I'm gonna chop up your legs and arms into slices, cover them in egg and breadcrumbs,

fuckin' deep fry them and then create the most disgusting bowl of katsudon this world has ever seen as your last damned meal!!!!"

Midoriya couldn't help but loudly yelp at those threats, his survival instinct starting to kick in to tell him to get away from Bakugou as fast as his still intact legs allowed him. Under normal circumstances, he might have done exactly that but they were midway through a training exercise. He couldn't afford to run with his tail between his legs. He needed to face the raging, murderous beast darting in his direction at full speed come hell or high water - and that hell was already guaranteed to happen.

He quickly jumped out of the impact trajectory but only to end up bumping face-first against a thick wall of ice. Todoroki seemed to be dealing with Kirishima at the moment so how come that wall was right there to sign him up for an early death, couldn't help but whimper Midoriya deep in his heart.

Childhood friend or not, you're not going to eat Bakugou's home-cooked meals…, inwardly grumbled Todoroki, his face vacant of all expression as he finished turning Kirishima into a meaty popsicle.

"Oh no…" gasped Midoriya, trapped between a stone-hearted beast and a solid wall of ice. If his brain hadn't been so busy conjuring a split-second strategy to escape, he probably would have seen his life flashing before his eyes.

"Die!!" roared Bakugou, stuffing an explosive punch straight at Midoriya's face. The little shit had the nerve to avoid his blow, which caused his fist to dig deep into the wall of ice and explode with it out of the sudden temperature change in the air. The explosion's shockwave ran through the entirety of the training grounds, erupting small surprised yelps from the observation area. "I said die, you fucking pest!"

“Ugh!” The steam around the broken ice wall made it hard to see but Midoriya had years of bullying on his side. He could accurately predict that a punch or a kick would come towards his torso area right about now so he focused his defence on that portion of his body. It didn’t take half a second for his prediction to become true in the shape of an Olympic-graded roundhouse kick. If that angry explosive punch had destroyed Todoroki’s ice wall as if a castle of cards, he didn’t want to imagine what that kick would have done to his ribcage had he not caught Bakugou’s leg with his hands and arms.

“You fuckin’...!” growled Bakugou, his eyes tightening into a terror-striking glare. Out of everything Midoriya could have done, this had been the single most annoying of them all. “I am not going to take any of this fuckin’ cheek from the likes of you!”

Bakugou gave a quick jump and, after putting some spin to it with a blast, he kicked Midoriya in the head with his free leg. Whether Midoriya was knocked out with that strong impact or when he came crashing against the remnants of the wall of ice after being sent flying, Bakugou came out of the one-on-one short-lived fight unscattered and Midoriya was officially down.

Or as unscattered as his sleep-deprived body could be.

“One left to go…” mumbled Bakugou, wiping the sweat and condensed steam off of his face with his upper arm. He turned around with a slightly wobbly motion and pointed his index finger at Todoroki. “Hey, Half-and-Half Bastard! It’s your turn now! Come and get me if you can!”

“...” With a deadpan expression on his face, Todoroki slightly leaned his upper body down and touched the ground with his right hand. The entirety of the training ground’s floor was instantly covered in a thin layer of ice, which continued to climb up in the air until a translucent cupola surrounded them completely.

What is this guy scheming this time around?, suspiciously wondered Bakugou, his body adjusting itself into a more defensive position right away.

"A momentary truce?" asked Todoroki, his head tilted to the right as he offered his open arms at Bakugou.

"Pffft!" laughed Bakugou despite himself. Seriously, that had been the most adorable random action he had ever seen someone doing his whole damned life. A knowing smirk slowly started tugging at the corner of his lips shortly after, however, as he immediately came up with a way of knocking Todoroki out midway through a 'momentary truce'. "Okay, but a very short momentary truce only."

Confident of his surefire winning strategy, Bakugou walked up to Todoroki and hugged him. Team 3's battle royale came to an end at that moment.

He's going to be so pissed at me when he wakes up but it's better than having him hurt himself even further with lack of sleep, inwardly sighed Todoroki, his face completely expressionless as he grabbed Bakugou's inert body against his own. Who would have thought Bakugou's instant sleeping speed could be used in such a convenient way during a sleep-deprived fight? With a small chuckle, Todoroki changed his hold to Bakugou's body and put him over his back so he could haul him out of the TDL gym and into the infirmary once again. *Better tell Aizawa-sensei I knocked him out by accident than the secret behind taming a moody koala.*

Chapter 17

“I’ll be stepping out of the infirmary for a while so if you could keep an eye out on those two for me, I’d appreciate it,” said Recovery Girl, picking up her syringe-slash-walking-stick so she could take her momentary leave from her post to take care of her other duties. As she walked out of the infirmary, she gently grumbled to herself, “Seriously, these first years this year are just unbelievable… Midoriya-kun was already a recurrent patient in my infirmary and now it seems Bakugou-kun is taking right after him…”

With such a parting grumbling line, there was little that Todoroki could say as he was left in charge of looking after the sleeping Bakugou and the still unconscious Midoriya, both of them lying down on two beds separated by a curtain.

Since Midoriya had been the one who took a hit in the head, Todoroki went to take a quick look at him. Not that he understood all that much about medicine and neurology but Midoriya seemed to be peacefully knocked out in the bed. There were also no visible cuts or wounds on his head, save for the large bruise on the side of his face where Bakugou’s kick hit him. Recovery Girl didn’t seem overly worried about his unconscious state so that made Todoroki feel slightly less guilty about being an accomplice to Midoriya’s injury.

Now that Todoroki didn’t feel as restless as before, he closed the curtain around Midoriya’s bed and returned to the one beside it. He seemed to have arrived precisely as the grumpy ferocious beast was waking up from its short-lived rest.

“You’re awake already?” asked Todoroki with a small voice, so as to not disturb the other patient in the infirmary.

“You sure screwed me up hard there, didn’t you, you damned

opportunistic asshole?" growled Bakugou, pushing the bedsheets away from his body as he sat up on the bed. "You fucking tricked me!!"

"Have you forgotten about the 'shopping list' you gave me?" simply said Todoroki, accusingly staring at Bakugou with an expressionless demeanour. "Not to mention, you were thinking about knocking me out with that hug, weren't you?"

Bakugou was about to bark a retort back at Todoroki when he realised he had nothing around him to dig him out of the hole he had once again jumped headfirst into. So he just limited himself to clicking his tongue in annoyance while looking away.

"We still have two more days of battle royale training exercises so don't let this loss bother you," sighed Todoroki, closing the curtain behind himself before he walked to the bed and took a seat next to Bakugou. "And it even helped you figure out which is your weakness so that's a plus side to having lost against me. One loss amongst three wins is nothing compared to those who only have losses so far. It's just one lo- Ngh!"

"You say 'loss' or any similar words one more time and I'll make you swallow that tongue of yours," hissed Bakugou as he grabbed Todoroki by the cheeks and squeezed his mouth shut. "I didn't lose. You won because you cheated!"

"You were preaching about a battle royale being a battlefield with no space for mercy just the other day so what's with that sudden conversation about cheating?" pointed out Todoroki after he removed Bakugou's hand from his cheeks. "If you hadn't been so stubborn and told me right away you weren't being able to sleep on your own, you wouldn't be so sleep-deprived and tired right now. I'm your portable AC, aren't I?"

“My lack of sleep has nothing to do with a lack of proper AC in my recently refurbished bedroom…” mumbled Bakugou with a pout. “How did you know I wasn’t being able to sleep again?”

“I pay more attention to you than what you give me credit for,” chuckled Todoroki, gently ruffling Bakugou’s hair. “I saw you going out for a run in the middle of the night. Your eyes have been redder than usual and your mood swings were even being directed at Kirishima. Well, I also haven’t been able to sleep very well lately so I guess I could relate to how you’ve been feeling more than usual. It really sucks to not be able to sleep.”

“It does…” sighed Bakugou, tilting his head to his left and leaning it on Todoroki’s shoulder. “It does suck big time…”

“Do you want to take a quick nap until the end of the other three battle royale exercises?” asked Todoroki, leaning his head a little bit downwards to take a peek at Bakugou’s face. It seemed his tempestuous mood had gone away and he had returned to be a snuggling advocate. “I’ll wake you up when it’s time to return to the dorm.”

“Nn,” softly hummed Bakugou in acknowledgement with a small nod of his head. When Todoroki started getting up, possibly to change to the other side of the bed and give him his colder right side like usual, he grabbed his arm to keep him from leaving. His body all but slid against the mattress as he curled up against his leg, his arm lazily left on top of his lap. “This side is fine too…”

“Okay,” said Todoroki, pushing his body back to the same sitting position as before. He continued softly caressing his hair, trying to help Bakugou drift off to sleep faster. “I don’t know if it all started because of the heatwave but you should probably consult your inability to fall asleep with Recovery Girl. Since you don’t like sleeping with me, you’ll have to find other methods to get some sleep done.”

“You want me to sleep or to talk? Because I can’t do both at the same time,” snorted Bakugou, rolling his eyes around before he closed them and fully leaned his face against Todoroki’s leg. “And I already told you it’s not a matter of me disliking sleeping with you or me being angry at you for pushing me out of the bed… I do like sleeping with you. I just don’t want this to become a bad habit. Well, it’s already too damn late for that now… You got me completely hooked to your fuckin’ body.”

Bakugou, I don’t think this is the right time for you to make such outrageous confessions, inwardly groaned Todoroki, covering his blushing face with his right hand. He could really use some freshening up right about now. “Yes, but it’s not a good solution in the long run. I also like sleeping with you but even I know it’s impossible to do it all the time. What will you do during school breaks or if the hero agency you do your internship at is in a different prefecture from mine?”

“Then I’ll kidnap and incarcerate you whenever I need to leave the dorm. That way I can monopolise your body during the night for as long as it pleases me,” said Bakugou, a mischievous smirk on his lips as he slowly turned his body on the bed so he could look up at Todoroki from his laid down position. “I even have the rope and duct tape ready for it already.”

“You’re right, you should go to sleep now,” said Todoroki, swallowing in dry. He was the one who wanted to have a piece of duct tape right now because the metamorphosis from koala to snake had begun once again and, bed aside, the infirmary was not the right location for it. Thankfully, Midoriya was unconscious or his ears would have gotten backdoor access to Bakugou’s masterful temptation.

“Sleep? Or talk?” asked Bakugou, lifting his arm from Todoroki’s lap. He grabbed his upper clothes and yanked him slightly down, whispering those inviting words with a sly smirk. “Which one?”

“There’s no actual winning against you, is there?” deadpanned Todoroki, leaning closer to Bakugou while shifting his sitting position on the bed.

“Nope,” said Bakugou with a small mischievous chuckle. “I always get what I want. And when I don’t, I go and get it.”

“You were the one who said you didn’t want to sleep together,” pointed out Todoroki, arching an eyebrow at the contradictions between Bakugou’s current playfulness and his previous stubborn refusals.

“Shut up and kiss me already,” grumbled Bakugou, pushing his head up from the bed to capture Todoroki’s lips. What began as a gentle peck soon turned into a full-blown kiss, with Bakugou teasingly licking his lips to urge him deeper.

Sleep deprivation is the best, inwardly deadpanned Todoroki. Their hasty breaths kept mingling together as they deliciously tasted each other’s mouths. Todoroki grabbed the zipper of Bakugou’s gym shirt and slowly pulled it down to expose his bare chest as he whispered against his lips, “Try to keep your voice down. Midoriya is sleeping right over there.”

“Why should I give a shit about the Shitty Nerd?” scoffed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. “I hit him hard enough to knock him out for a good couple of hours.”

“Whether he’s awake or asleep, I don’t want him hearing you,” whispered Todoroki, his hands slowly sliding through the sides of Bakugou’s toned torso. The way his skin and body shivered and rippled at his touch made the thin thread keeping his self-control in check snap completely. He unhurriedly lapped his tongue up Bakugou’s neck, chin, until their lips met once again.

“Heh, someone sure is confident he can get me loud enough to be heard by a sleeping moron,” teasingly laughed Bakugou, his arms wrapping around Todoroki’s neck. The heated look on his mismatched eyes as he stared right into his made his spine tingle in excitement.

“I got a sleep-deprived wreck like *this* with just a kiss, I think I have enough reasons to feel confident right now,” pointed out Todoroki, one of his hands sliding back down his torso until it reached the bulge on Bakugou’s gym pants. He used his fingers to lift and lower the fabric, his hand fully pulling out the blonde’s erection. Todoroki gave a light peck to Bakugou’s moist lips before he slowly began moving his hand up and down. “So keep your voice down, okay?”

“You’re starting to get too ahead of yourself… Haa…” grumbled Bakugou, his voice husky with arousal. His hands tightened their grip on Todoroki’s upper clothes, his back making a low arch with every pump of his hand. He yanked at his clothes hard, making Todoroki fall right on top of him. Bakugou snorted as he felt something just as hard and hot grinding against his leg. “Heh… Even though you’re just as horny as me.”

“It would be harder not to, with you looking like this,” said Todoroki with a small pout. The lovely shade of pink dusting his cheeks, red eyes lightly glazed with lust and that fiendish smirk tempting at sight alone - it would be plain weird if Todoroki wasn’t turned on right now.

Todoroki grabbed Bakugou’s arms and sat up on the bed once again, pulling him along until Bakugou was neatly sat down on his lap. They passionately kissed as Bakugou did the job for him and took his hardened cock out, their bodies always closely glued to one another.

“Ngh… Haa…” gasped Bakugou, the hand rubbing and jerking his cock together with Todoroki’s slowly starting to lose steam. Being this

close to Todoroki's warmth was slowly seeping out the little energy he still had in his body and gently lulling him to sleep amidst his arousal. *Ugh, I give up…* "Todoroki…"

"Hm? Are you going to come?" asked Todoroki, cupping Bakugou's blushing cheek with one of his hands. The way Bakugou silently shook his head in denial was such a precious sight he wanted to see it again and again. No matter the circumstances, he couldn't honestly say what he felt, even though he was so quick at hurling out everything that crossed his mind. He put his other hand over Bakugou's and fastened their pumping pace, erupting a muffled whimper from the sleepy beast. "You should. Ngh… I want to see you looking even cuter."

"Shut up… you jerk…" growled Bakugou, lightly scraping his nails against Todoroki's length - it was funny how Todoroki flinched in reflex at it. He wanted to laugh straight on his face at that amusing reaction but his mouth and body had different plans for him. "Haa… Don't call me cute… Ngh… Shit… Ahh…!"

Bakugou's body shuddered from head to toes as he reached his climax. Seeing his sexy orgasming expression was also enough to get Todoroki to come a couple of seconds later. With it, Bakugou slumped down completely over Todoroki, both of their chests heaving in a quickened rhythm against one another.

"I was… haa… going to tell you… to buy a larger futon this weekend…" huffed Bakugou, turning his forehead against Todoroki's shoulder so he could take a peek at his flushed features. "It'll take a while… to get a bigger bed in my room."

"Want to come too?" asked Todoroki, slowly trying to regulate his breathing rhythm as he relished on the afterglow of his climax and Bakugou's snuggling. "There's plenty of good restaurants with soba dishes we haven't gone to... My treat this time."

“My soba is better than any random restaurant’s…” grumbled Bakugou, lightly pinching Todoroki’s stomach area. “Just you wait… I’ll make you so hooked to my soba… you won’t even consider the restaurant’s dishes to be edible human food anymore.”

“I can barely wait for that,” deadpanned Todoroki, rolling his eyes around in a masked way afterwards. He gave a quick kiss to Bakugou’s forehead and jumped out of the bed, quickly adjusting his clothes as he did so. “I’ll go get something to wipe us clean.”

“Nn… Hurry up…” mumbled Bakugou, his body sluggishly lying down on the messy bedsheets. “I wanna sleep…”

Todoroki simply chuckled at Bakugou’s spoiled words and hurried out of the closed curtain. He washed his hands on the small washbasin on the infirmary’s wall and then grabbed a couple of towels, wetting one of them for easier cleaning.

As he walked back to Bakugou’s infirmary bed, Todoroki slowly glanced at the other closed curtain. For better or for worse, he should check on Midoriya’s condition - both to certify himself that he was still very much unconscious and that he was not dying from Bakugou’s kick. He opened a small gap in the curtain and took a peek in the bed’s direction.

“He’s gone…” whispered Todoroki, blinking his eyes a couple of times at bumping into an empty bed, the bedsheets left in total chaos that seemed to indicate a hasty retreat.

He then glanced over to the infirmary's door, closed just like Recovery Girl had left it when she went to take care of her other working functions. The only difference was that the ‘out’ door sign was gone from sight - most likely to be placed on the outside of the infirmary’s door.

He heard us, didn't he…?, inwardly cringed Todoroki, lightly face-palming himself with the towel. It seemed the hurdles of that day were yet to be over.

Chapter 18

This is too much pressure for a first-year student in high school…, inwardly muttered Midoriya, his legs teetering up and down as he remained sat down at the dining table of the dorm's communal area. One of the sides of his face was covered with a large cooling pad, a make-shift cure to help the bruised swollen area not become utterly disfigured for the remainder of the week. *All Might, what am I supposed to do in a situation like this? Having a Quirk or being Quirkless is the same thing when it comes to waking up in the infirmary to the sound of… of…*

"AHHHHHHH!" screamed Midoriya, grabbing his messy locks of hair as he slammed his forehead against the table's surface.

"Deku-kun, are you okay?" asked Uraraka, a worried semblance on her face as she tried to figure out what had happened to Midoriya all of a sudden. "Is it your injury? Is it hurting so much you can't help but scream? Do you want to go back to the infirma-"

"NO!" yelped Midoriya, lifting his head from the table at the speed of light. He waved his hands in denial in front of his body, shaking his head around just as intensely. "T-There's no need for that! I'm fine! No pain at all! Rather, Kacchan should have hit me much, much harder!!"

"If you say so," said Uraraka with a certain suspicion, her head slightly tilted as she observed Midoriya sighing with so much dejection and misery that one might have thought he was nearing his deathbed.

What Uraraka didn't know and Midoriya was fully aware of is that he was most certainly walking at full speed to his own death. Whether it was simply out of bad luck or because Bakugou had become something akin to a harbinger of terrifying close encounters with death throughout his whole life, he wasn't sure - but he was

guaranteed to be killed any moment now.

A gruesome death. Something so horrifying that torture scenes in explicit horror and thriller movies paled in comparison. An end to a human life that would appear in history books for all future generations to learn from.

What should I do? How exactly can I fix this in a way that doesn't get me killed?, continued muttering Midoriya in the back of his mind. *They must have definitely noticed that I wasn't there. I don't know when they noticed but I'm certain they eventually did! They know… They know I know! They know I heard them! K-Kacchan is going to slaughter me the next time he sees me!! W-What should I do? Is there any way to make him spare my life? A-At this point, I'd be totally fine with being beaten to a pulp if that means living to see tomorrow's sunrise… Would Kacchan forgive me if I apologised…? Probably not… but if I apologise and prostrate myself to him in the most pitiful of ways, he might get so grossed out by it that he just gets me an arm or leg broken… Or he might get even angrier and torture me three times worse than he already plans to…*

"...it might not even work but apologising is the only solution I can come up with…" groaned Midoriya, his head once again falling against the table's surface. He slowly, fearfully turned his face towards the closed elevator's door and gulped down hard. It was nearly dinner time so both Bakugou and Todoroki were most likely back in the dorm too. The two of them or one at a time would soon enough come down to eat.

Midoriya could feel his heart loudly thumping inside of his ribcage, his eyes nearly unblinking as he fixedly stared at the elevator. Soon… Soon they'd come down… Soon… Any moment now… Very soon…

The electronic panel next to the elevator's door flickered, an arrow signalizing a downwards motion popping up on the screen.

Midoriya's heart started racing even faster. He could even hear his blood furiously pumping through his veins. An elevator ride never seemed so long and lengthy as he stared a hole through those closed doors. Even the opening of the doors seemed to take an unnecessary amount of time to reveal who was the student coming down from the upper floors.

"K-K-K-KACCHAN!!!" loudly yelped Midoriya, suddenly getting up from his seat and throwing the chair to the floor. His next actions were done with so much panic and in such a flustered mental state that he barely remembered running in Bakugou's direction, grab him by the arm and immediately drag him outside of the communal area and into behind the dorm building.

"What the fuck do you think you're doing, Shitty Nerd!?" roared Bakugou, furiously yanking his arm out of Midoriya's disgustingly sweaty hands. "A kick on your ugly mug wasn't enough so you want more, is that it? HUH!?"

"N-No…! T-That's not…!" stuttered Midoriya, readily shaking his head in denial. He opened and closed his trembling lips a couple of times, much like a fish out of water would have, before he fully threw away all of his pride and fears. His body slumped down on the ground, prostrating himself at Bakugou's feet in the most humble way he could think of - his forehead and nose were being squashed against the gritty soil, and his hands were clasped against one another over his head. "I-I'M SORRY!!"

"...Huh?" interjected Bakugou, a look of pure repugnance on his face as he looked down at the quivering Midoriya.

"I'm sorry but when I woke up in the infirmary, I ended up hearing you and Todoroki-kun while you two were doing stuff," apologised Midoriya, his nervous words coming out like non-stop shots of a machine gun. "But I didn't mean to do that, I just ended up waking up at the wrong time, in the wrong place, and I totally didn't mean to

cause you two any sort of discomfort with such unavoidable actions, it was purely a coincidence, yes, totally a coincidence, an accident that I had no control over, and something that I intend to take down to the grave with me, something I will never mention or talk about to anyone, I won't even think about it as I live out my miserable life as usual, even though I was already aware of you two dating for a while now, I have absolutely no intention of revealing such vital, delicate information about the two of you, you can rest assured that your secret is safe with-"

"Hey, Deku."

"Y-YES!?" yelped Midoriya, his body flinching as if hit by an earthquake. It sort of did, when Bakugou decided to put his foot on top of the back of his head and pressed his face even closer to the ground. "Ugh!"

"Who do you think you are to get the fucking delusion that you have any say or opinion about my life and my relationships?" growled Bakugou, putting more weight on Midoriya's head as he leaned his upper body forward. "Why should I care that you know I'm dating Todoroki or what I'm doing with him in the infirmary? Huh!? Got a problem with it? Then go ahead and shove that problem up your own ass, for all the fucks I give! I could care less if you or the neighbour's dog or the freakin' prime minister knows about it! Are we clear?"

"N-No, that's not…!" croaked Midoriya, doing a sorry attempt at not breathing in all the dust and dirt from the outside ground. "I-It's up to you and Todoroki-kun who you date! Cough…! It's none of my business what you two do either. I-I just didn't… cough! I didn't want you two to get uncomfortable or hurt because I- Argh!"

"The only uncomfortable shit here is your creepy stalker behaviour!" hissed Bakugou, giving one last strong push to Midoriya's head before he removed his foot. "And how the heck would a weakling like you even hurt *me* !?"

“I-I mean, homosexual relationships are a sensitive topic so…” tried to explain Midoriya, slowly pushing his upper body from the ground. “N-Not that I think you two are doing anything wrong or something, that’s not what I mean! Um… What I’m trying to say is… Ah… Um… I know about it, I don’t mind it and I won’t be talking about it to others…? Though I guess I was a bit surprised about you being able to date someone, with the type of personality you have and such. Ahaha…”

“You really are looking for a way to get beaten to a fuckin’ pulp today, aren’t you!?” roared Bakugou, stomping forward in Midoriya’s direction once again.

“A-Am not! I-It just means Todoroki-kun can overcome your bad sides and focus on whatever good parts you have with the power of love, much like you’re doing with him…!” yelped Midoriya, covering his smudged with dirt face with his arms. He waited and waited for a hit to come but he never felt such a blow. So, slowly, very hesitantly, Midoriya lowered his arms and glanced over at Bakugou. “Um… Kac...chan…?”

Bakugou’s face was redder than the brightest and darkest shades of red combined, expanding all the way to the tips of his ears. His body had been left completely frozen in place as he was about to swing his fist at Midoriya’s face.

“Eh…?” gasped Midoriya, his mouth dropping wide open at seeing such an innocent(?) and adorable(!?) blushing expression on the usually snarky and ferocious beast. Maybe he had sniffed some nasty substance while being forced to breathe in the dirt on the floor because Bakugou, right now, almost seemed to be… c-cute!? “Ah… Um… K-Kaccha-”

All of a sudden, a steaming red shadow walked over the corner of the

dorm building, darting in their direction faster than a bullet train. Midoriya had never seen Todoroki so furious, not even when the topic was related to the bad blood he shared with his father. It was just as much of a terrifying sight as Bakugou's usual hissy fits were - the only difference was that Todoroki was literally on fire with silent anger, opposite to Bakugou's loud explosive blasts.

" *You saw, didn't you, Midoriya?* " asked Todoroki, his face a spooky blank as he looked down at Midoriya from next to Bakugou.

"S-Saw what… Todoroki-kun?" squeaked Midoriya, his body shrinking down at the cold yet blazing tone of Todoroki's voice.

"I'm sick of this conversation already," sighed Bakugou, rolling his eyes around as he turned around on his heels to leave. He grabbed Todoroki by the back of the collar of his shirt and started dragging him back inside the dorm. "This time I've really run out of stuff to cook dinner with so go fetch me some bean sprouts and your choice of soba noodles from the grocery store."

"Okay," acknowledged Todoroki, his mismatched eyes still glaring daggers at Midoriya as he was forcibly hauled away.

"…Todoroki-kun's power of love truly is a force to be reckoned, ahaha…" awkwardly laughed Midoriya, a shudder going down his spine.

Midoriya had never thought there would come a day where Bakugou spared him from a terrifying death AND saved him from being slaughtered by Todoroki.

-.-

“Hey, how long until you finish whatever it is you’re doing?” asked Bakugou, leaning his head back to take a peek at Todoroki from his laid down position on the futon.

“…”

“Don’t fucking ignore me, asshole!” growled Bakugou, taking the pillow from underneath his head and throwing it at Todoroki, who didn’t even look his way when called. He rolled his body on the futon until he got laid down on his stomach, a pouting frown creasing his brows. “What’s with you now? You’ve been in such a pissy mood since you returned from the grocery store. Did they raise the prices of your favourite soba brand or some shit like that?”

“Midoriya saw it,” grumbled Todoroki, his glaring eyes focused on the English composition they had been told to write as homework. “He definitely saw that cute side of you… Kirishima saw another cute side of you… At this rate, they’ll be stealing all of that cuteness and I’ll be left with what?”

“Pfft! Ahahahahahaha!” burst out laughing Bakugou, his hand lightly tapping at the futon several times amidst his amusement. “Wait, don’t tell me you’re jealous? Are you freaking kidding me? Ahahaha! Todoroki, have you been glaring at Kirishima lately because you’re jealous of him? And Deku? *Deku* , that shitty nerd who sometimes nearly pisses himself at the sight of me? Ahahahahaha!”

“Don’t laugh,” sighed Todoroki, placing his mechanical pencil down on his desk and shifting his gaze to Bakugou. “I was being serious.”

“Aww, you poor, pitiful oaf,” snorted Bakugou as he rolled his eyes around. He got up from the futon and walked up to Todoroki, where

he pushed his schoolwork off of the short desk and then sat down on the now free space as if he owned the place. He pinched Todoroki's sulking cheeks and stretched them sideways. "Are you actually a bigger idiot than Kaminari but better at pretending to be otherwise? Because I could have sworn you just said the stupidest bullshit ever. I don't remember ever sharing the bed with Kirishima and I sure as hell would kill myself faster than jerk Deku's craggy dick off. Why don't you put those brains of yours to good use and closely think about the common factor on all of those times you or someone else supposedly thought I'm 'cute' or whatever shit that might be? I'll throw you a freebie and give you a clue. It's inside of this room, sulking for absolutely no reason whatsoever."

"Bakugou, you're the best," said Todoroki, wrapping his arms around Bakugou's waist and lightly kissing his lips afterwards. That sure had been one smooth way to defuse doubts and concerns. "The best in the whole world."

"Yeah, yeah, the world and I already both know I'm the best," laughed Bakugou, removing Todoroki's arms from around him so he could get up from the desk. "Now hurry up and answer my damn question. How long until you're done with that?"

"It's been done since half an hour ago," deadpanned Todoroki, organising his studying materials back on top of his desk.

"Fuck you! I'll be sleeping with Kirishima tonight!" snapped Bakugou, grabbing the pillow from the tatami floor to shove it against Todoroki's face multiple times. "Then you'll have a reason to get jealous and sulk your way into an empty bed, you jerk! Oh right, you just have a rough night if you sleep alone in this room, don't you? Not like your goddamned boyfriend, who can't get a single wink of sleep without-"

"Bakugou?" called Todoroki, shaking his head slightly so he could move the pillow away from his face. He wasn't expecting to see

Bakugou making that expression when he was midway through his admonishments. “Which part of what you just said got you blushing like that?”

“T-Time out,” requested Bakugou, looking the other way while covering his burning face with his hand. “Actually, let’s just sleep.”

“Which part?” insisted Todoroki, mischievously jumping up to a standing position. He circled around Bakugou, trying to get another sneak peek at that cute blushing expression. “Hey, which part?”

“You know very well which part!!” hissed Bakugou, suddenly tugging one of Todoroki’s wrists down while he kicked his legs out of balance. Todoroki successfully came tumbling down on top of the futon. He hurriedly turned off the bedroom’s lights and sulkily laid down next to Todoroki. “Now shut up and sleep! I’m double sleep-deprived!”

“You don’t blink an eye about doing something like that in the infirmary but act all shy when you call yourself my boyfriend,” chuckled Todoroki, turning sideways on the futon so he could hug the blushing mess trying to hide from him. He gently kissed the top of Bakugou’s head as he nestled himself against his embrace. “Now I see. If that’s not cute, then I no longer know what the word means.”

“I said shut up and sleep!” roared Bakugou, forming a fist with his hand and slamming it straight on Todoroki’s stomach.

“Y-Yes…” groaned Todoroki, lightly coughing his pain away. Dating or not, it seemed some violent habits would not disappear anytime soon...

Chapter 19

Chapter Notes

> Hey, guys! The summer heat is back so I'm officially as useless as Bakugou was during the heatwave. Chapters might not come out as fast as before because my brain is in meltdown process two-thirds of my waking hours TTwTT
> Here to one more summer without proper AC... y-yay...

“Midoriya, what kind of restaurant do you think Bakugou would like to eat at?” asked Todoroki without any warning, his head slightly tilted to the left as he walked back to the dorm alongside Midoriya. “He said he likes spicy dishes but that’s a type of food I don’t usually eat. Since you’re his childhood friend, you might know some good places for us to go this Sunday.”

“A-Are you sure it’s safe to ask me that…?” asked back Midoriya, fearfully taking a couple of steps sideways to put some distance between him and Todoroki.

“I don’t think Bakugou is around at the moment,” pointed out Todoroki, part of him wondering why Midoriya was readying himself to make a rushed emergency escape. “He said he had some things to buy so he went out with Kirishima.”

“Kacchan might not be around but you are,” said Midoriya, relaxing a bit more now that he understood yesterday’s frightening glares probably wouldn’t repeat themselves. “You reacted pretty strongly yesterday while I was talking with Kacchan. Actually, you reacted more strongly than Kacchan himself did!”

“Sorry, I didn’t mean to,” deadpanned Todoroki, his voice just as monotone as his expressionless face - even though his well-intentioned apologetical words were honestly meant. “I just felt a sudden urge to incinerate you at that time. I wonder if there’s something wrong with

my Quirk?”

“I… don’t think the problem back then was your Quirk…” sighed Midoriya as he awkwardly scratched his cheek. “Um… I told this to Kacchan yesterday but I’ll just say it to you too since I don’t know if you talked about it or not... I don’t mind that you two are dating. For as long as you’re happy, that’s what matters the most. The rest is just some minor details.”

Though I do feel that my life is slowly nearing its end because of it…, inwardly added Midoriya, a small shudder crawling up his spine. *On the other hand, it’s interesting how Kacchan is the biggest source of my internal fears but Todoroki-kun is the one who could physically kill me without meaning to… That’s something I should probably keep in mind. It might come in handy in the future.*

“I think you’re far too kind to have a problem with anyone’s relationship,” pointed out Todoroki, a small smile on his lips. “And even if you did actually have a problem with it, you’d probably just keep it all to yourself and only show your support. That’s what you always do whenever you experience something you can’t openly share with those around you.”

“...I wasn’t expecting to be called out like that by you,” breathed Midoriya, sincerely surprised at how well Todoroki seemed to know and understand him - he had a knack to be dense and completely oblivious to how others felt so such accurate judging of emotions had completely caught Midoriya off guard. “I truly don’t have anything against you dating Kacchan. But my heart won’t be able to take this for much longer! Even if Kacchan says he doesn’t care if others know about it, I can’t help but feel that he’s going to kill me at any moment now! And the longer it takes him to do anything to me, the more scared I get of his retaliation!”

Bakugou said he doesn’t mind others knowing about us dating?, inwardly noted Todoroki, his brain completely muting Midoriya’s ongoing

venting session out. His mismatched eyes slowly started sparkling amidst his expressionless demeanour as he realised something. *I see. So he doesn't mind if others know.*

If Bakugou didn't mind if other people knew he was dating Todoroki, then that meant he wouldn't mind if *everybody* knew he was dating him… right?

-.-

"I don't mind going out shopping with you but do I really need to be the one carrying your stuff?" sighed Kirishima, one of his shoulders slumped down due to the bag's weight.

"My hands are too busy right now," said Bakugou, not even sparing a single glance at Kirishima as he attentively studied what was being shown on his cell phone's screen.

"Put your phone away then," said Kirishima, rolling his eyes around. He glanced down at the shopping bag and then looked back to Bakugou, an eyebrow slightly arched. "Why did you even need to buy flour? Are you planning on pranking someone with it or something?"

"It's for cooking, obviously," snorted Bakugou, locking the cell phone's screen before putting it back inside of his pants' pocket and yanking the grocery's bag out of Kirishima's hand. His evil smirk made a comeback as he mischievously said, "I'm about to fuck up Todoroki's taste buds for life. Once he tastes this, he'll never, I repeat, *never* be able to eat any other soba noodles. And jokes on him because I'll never cook soba again once I pay back my debt, no matter how much he begs or cries for it. Hehehe!"

"Wait, you're going to make the soba from scratch!?" yelped

Kirishima, quickly opening a gap in the top part of the bag to double-check its insides. He didn't know much about cooking and the whole process involved in it but, as the Japanese person he was, even he knew soba was made out of buckwheat flour. "Damn, you sure are going the extra mile with whatever debt this is. Especially if you're doing it for such evil reasons."

"I always give my best to whatever it is I'm doing," said Bakugou after a smug scoff. "Especially if I'm doing it for evil reasons."

Though that's what he said, rather than the aforementioned 'evil reasons', Bakugou just wanted to pay Todoroki back with the same coin. Todoroki got him physically dependant on his body to be able to sleep, he'd get Todoroki's entire digestive system addicted to his food - who cares if 100% buckwheat soba noodles were one of the hardest Japanese staple dishes to cook from scratch, Bakugou would do it perfectly and put all professionals on that culinary field to shame!

"That's so manly," dreamily sighed Kirishima, clenching one of his fists near his heart. "A conflicting manly but manly nevertheless. So, the reason why you've been on your phone since you dragged me all the way to the grocery store was to learn how to make soba?"

"Yeah," acknowledged Bakugou with a small nod of his head.

"I'm surprised you can be that dedicated to such a trivial thing," chuckled Kirishima, giving a quick slap on Bakugou's back as he opened the dorm's front door for them.

"Me too," snorted Bakugou, the small smile lingering on his lips for a few seconds more. The dedication was probably because it wasn't as trivial a matter as others might perceive it but who cares? Messing around with Todoroki's head was worth the time and trouble.

“Hey, Bakugou, Kirishima!” greeted Kaminari, waving at his two friends from the sofa. “Back already? You sure were fast!”

“Hey!” greeted back Kirishima, lifting his hand to point with his thumb at Bakugou. “He only dragged me there so I could carry the bag until here. Can you believe that?”

“I have better things to do than to carry grocery bags,” scoffed Bakugou, making an immediate bee-line to the kitchen so he could store the flour. Halfway there, however, Todoroki blocked his path. “What?”

“Welcome back,” said Todoroki, motioning his hands forward to cup Bakugou’s cheeks. Not minding the time, place or occasion, he leaned forward and unashamedly kissed him in the middle of the communal area.

“.....Eh?” gasped Kirishima and Kaminari at the same time, their mouths left hanging wide open as they did so.

Todoroki-kun…!!!, inwardly screeched Midoriya, immediately slapping his hands on his face so he could cover it. He should have known better than to let Todoroki deal with his relationship with Bakugou on his own. He should have given him some warnings on what **not to do** in front of everyone if he wanted to keep Bakugou from becoming a mass murderer. *Argh, geez... I don’t care anymore. This is way too out of control for me to deal with now!*

“What’s with you all of a sudden?” asked Bakugou as he pulled his head slightly back to separate his lips from Todoroki’s. An eyebrow arched on his brows, he was about to ask if he had hit his head somewhere during the battle royale exercise of that afternoon when

the previous dead silence was broken down into loud screaming.

“EHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!?” yelled most of the students of class 1-A gathered in the communal area.

“Huh? Wait… HUH!?” babbled Kirishima, his eyes nearly popping out of their sockets as he glanced back and forth to Bakugou and Todoroki. He loudly yelped in total synchrony with Kaminari yet again, “WHAT!?”

“W-What was that just now!?” asked Ashido with a super excited voice, one of her hands covering her mouth while the other shamelessly pointed at her two classmates. “No, seriously! What was that just now?”

“I knew it,” said Asui, leisurely sitting down on the sofa as she observed her classmates freaking out.

“What do you mean, you knew it, Tsuyu-chan!?” yelped Uraraka, energetically fanning her beet-red face with her hands. She then looked over to Midoriya, who seemed to be in a similar type of meltdown that she was, even though there was little surprise mixed in it. That could only mean... “Deku-kun, did you also know!?”

“...yes…” sobbed Midoriya with a small voice, burying his face even more strongly against the palm of his hands.

“Midoriya said you didn’t care who knew about it,” said Todoroki in his own defence when Bakugou threw him a dirty look, his red eyes blazing in anger. “I don’t care either.”

“So this was all your doing, Shitty Nerd!!” growled Bakugou, yanking Todoroki’s hands from his face to be able to freely move around through the communal area. His demon overlord decided to come to say hello in the split-second Bakugou horizontally ran his thumb through his neck. “Instant death would be too kind for a fucking asswipe like you. Keep that in mind and tremble in fear for the rest of your miserable life because this will come back to bite you in the fucking ass when you least expect it!!”

Todoroki-kun… do you hate me this much…?, inwardly sobbed Midoriya, his legs trembling like bamboo to the wind as he slowly got up from the sofa and withdrew to his bedroom. Becoming a shut-in was starting to be a more appealing future job than a pro hero.

“Then… Does this mean you two are going out… or something…?” asked Sero, trying to make heads or tails of this extremely unexpected development. Bakugou was someone who seemed to hate even his own friends; getting a live performance of him being suddenly kissed by Todoroki, out of everyone in their class, was something akin to getting his brain blown up by a nuclear bomb.

“Yeah,” shortly acknowledged Bakugou, finally reaching the kitchen after glaring Midoriya into a retreat. He took the flour bags from the grocery plastic bag and stacked them inside of one of the lower cupboards.

“Kyaaaah!!” loudly squealed Ashido and Hagakure, excitedly jumping up and down while holding each other’s hands - though all everyone could see was Hagakure’s clothes doing all of the cheering. “The first couple in our class has been born!!”

“Perfect...” mumbled Mineta, creepily erasing two names out of the list in his cell phone. “Two of the biggest threats have taken each other out of the game… Hehe…”

“So, like, when did you two start dating?” asked Ashido in an exhilarated way, ganging up on Todoroki with Hagakure, Asui and Uraraka, who were just as curious as she was (though not as outwardly enthusiastic). “Who asked who out? Have you kiss- Oh, I guess you just did! Have you gone out on a date already? What about your families? Have you told them too? C’mon, hurry up and tell us more!!”

“Ah…” With so many questions being bombarded his way, Todoroki was left at a complete impasse. Which one of those questions was he supposed to answer first?

“Bakugou!!” called Kirishima, running towards Bakugou at full speed so he could tightly hug him. “Congratulations, dude! Wow, kids sure grow up fast these days! Good job there!”

“What the fuck is wrong with all of you!?” roared Bakugou, grabbing Kirishima by the shoulders to unglue him out of him. “You’re worse than gossiping old hags in the shopping district! Go mind your own damn business already!”

“No way, this is too good to let it pass just like that,” said Sero, patting Bakugou’s shoulder a couple of times. “Or what, are you feeling shy or something right now?”

“I’ll kill you,” warned Bakugou in the shape of a growl, erupting loud laughter from Sero, Kirishima and Kaminari. He dismissively rolled his eyes around and started walking towards the elevator.

“Oh c’mon, don’t just walk away like that!” complained Kaminari, putting his hands on his hips as a show of disapproval. “Let’s celebrate your love life together!”

“I prefer to celebrate with my homework than with you pests,” scoffed Bakugou, shoving his finger on the elevator’s button. Luckily for him, it didn’t take too long for it to return to the ground floor.

“Ohh! Wait! Help me with mine too!” yelped Kirishima, quickly running out of the kitchen so he could also step inside of the elevator with Bakugou. He somehow managed to get in just before the doors closed. With a sigh, he said, “I need help with that math assignment they gave us at the beginning of the week. I have no clue how I’m supposed to do that trigonometry stuff. I don’t even know why I’d need to know that to be a pro hero…”

“Don’t wanna,” denied Bakugou right away, no hesitation, no time given for ponderation.

“I went grocery shopping with you, carried the shopping bag most of the time and even prevented you from being run over by a car two times as you obsessed over soba making info!” argued back Kirishima, accusingly bumping his index finger on Bakugou’s chest. He happily grinned. “So help me out, ‘kay?”

“Fine…” grudgingly conceded Bakugou with an annoyed click of his tongue. “But I’m only explaining it to you once. I don’t care if you don’t understand at first try. I’m kicking you out whether you get it or not.”

“Thanks a lot, Bakugou!” said Kirishima, once again grinning at his friend. “By the way, I meant what I said down there. I’m happy for you and Todoroki.”

“Yeah,” grumbled Bakugou, averting Kirishima’s gaze just the slightest as he crossed his arms over his chest. “Thanks.”

“How did that happen, though?” asked Kirishima, tilting his head to the left. “You were always ready to bite Todoroki’s throat off whenever he talked to you. And I don’t mean it in the sense of you trying to hide your feelings or anything. I mean it in the sense you could beat him up to an early grave.”

“You don’t wanna know,” snorted Bakugou, softly chuckling to himself.

“Is that a ‘believe me, you really don’t want to know that’ you don’t wanna know or an ‘I’m too embarrassed to talk about it’ you don’t wanna know?” laughed Kirishima, readily running out of the elevator as soon as the door opened on the 4th floor.

“I’m gonna kill you too, Kirishima!!!!” loudly roared Bakugou, rushing out of the elevator to chase after Kirishima like a track-via-missile would have.

“Oh, so you really are feeling embarrassed right now!” said Kirishima, running back and forth on the corridor to avoid being caught by Bakugou. “You’re such a pure guy when it comes to love! Ahahahahahaha!”

“KIRISHIMAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!”

Chapter 20

“Hey…” grumbled Bakugou, his brow twitching in annoyance. He loudly slammed a metal bowl on the kitchen counter, his usual bad mood peaking at that exact moment as he roared at the infuriating group circling around that area. “I’m not some fucking circus attraction! Go away! Leave and don’t come back! If I see any of you damned pests 10 metres from me, I’m going to fucking slaughter you on the spot!”

“But we want to see how soba is made!” complained Kaminari, already rooted in place in the kitchen counter after dragging one of the dining table’s chairs to that spot. “To be more specific, soba handmade by you!”

“Exactly,” acknowledged Sero, Kirishima, Ashido and Uraraka at the same time, Iida, Asui, Tokoyami, Satou and Todoroki only nodding their heads in agreement with what had been said.

“Then go watch a video on the internet or some shit like that!” yelled Bakugou, angrily slamming the cupboard door closed after removing one of the buckwheat flour bags from it. “I want to focus and I can’t do it with you annoying the heck out of me!”

“Don’t be such a sour party pooper,” sighed Sero with a shrug of his shoulders. “We want to see a reenactment of those cooking skills you showed us in the training camp. But soba version! And maybe get a taste test of the first batch if your royal highness wouldn’t mind too much.”

“Yeah? Well, I don’t feed any random lazyass!!” said Bakugou, his gaze tightening even more. “You want to eat, then pay up! Offer your royal highness a tribute worthy of his name!”

I feel like I've heard that initial part before, inwardly noted Todoroki, his face completely blank as he slowly took a couple of steps further away from the noisy group. From what he got to learn about Bakugou in the last few days, what would come after that would be…

"How about a thin slice of your tongues for each soba noodle I give you?" mischievously suggested Bakugou, taking a knife from the drawer and pointing its blade in the group's direction. "I'll be so innovative with my cooking, I'll give a whole new meaning to basashi. And you're gonna love it so much, you'll cry for more."

"You know what? The video sounds safer!" yelped Sero, hurriedly scurrying back to the sofa with the rest of the group - Todoroki included.

"I didn't mean you, you idiot," said Bakugou, releasing a frustrated sigh as he grabbed the back of Todoroki's collar to prevent him from leaving the kitchen. "You can stay."

"Okay," happily acknowledged Todoroki, taking over Kaminari's previous seat after pushing it a bit closer to the place where Bakugou was setting up the cooking ingredients.

"Not fair…!" grumbled Kaminari, on his knees on the sofa while leaned over the backrest so he could keep an attentive glance on the kitchen area. He accusingly (and childishly) pointed in Todoroki's direction. "Why is he allowed to stay AND eat but we need to hastily retreat after getting a threat over our tongues? What's Todoroki's tribute to your royal highness, huh!?"

"His entire digestive system," leisurely said Bakugou while pouring flour on the bowl.

“Damnit!” cursed Kaminari, sulkily turning his body around on the sofa and crossing his arms over his chest. “Keep treating your boyfriend better than your friends and you’ll end up losing them all…”

“A significant other has priority over friends so Bakugou’s actions go without saying,” pointed out Iida, quickly adjusting his glasses on the bridge of his nose. “And even if that was not the case, he’d never cook for any of us. Not without some sort of catch, at least.”

“That’s true…” sighed the group, their bodies slumping down slightly against the sofa.

“To be honest, if Bakugou suddenly volunteered himself to cook for me, I’d start making arrangements to transfer to another school,” confessed Tokoyami, softly nodding his bird-shaped head. “Yes, it would definitely be a sign of poison or other nefarious substances…”

“Oh c’mon, Bakugou would never think of poisoning his own-” started Kirishima, aiming to laugh off Tokoyami’s frightening claims… until he remembered what Bakugou had told him earlier on their way back to the dorm. “Ah… Perhaps poison is the least of Todoroki’s worries right now…”

“Why?” asked Uraraka, her head tilted to the right in wonder.

“Bakugou told me he’s going to wreck Todoroki’s entire digestive system with how good his soba is,” explained Kirishima, his eyes going round as he half-covered his mouth with his hand. “He’s aiming for full control of his soba intake, to the point where he won’t be able to eat any other soba noodles except the ones he makes…”

“The way to a man’s heart is through his stomach,” said Asui as all of

them switched their gazes back to the kitchen, where they could see Bakugou working his way through the soba making while engaging in some occasional talking with Todoroki.

“He’s pushing that romantic trope a bit too far…” nervously laughed Ashido, feeling a sensation of dread she didn’t know possible with the main topic of conversation being cooking skills.

“Knowing Bakugou… I’m not surprised there…” sighed Sero, lightly shaking his head in disapproval. “And knowing Bakugou, he might be able to pull it off too…”

“That’s true…” sighed the group once again, taking their eyes off of the kitchen area and returning to their initial sitting positions. They needed to send a silent prayer at Todoroki and his taste buds.

“Oh, holy shit…” exclaimed Satou, his eyes wide open in shock as he stared fixedly at his cell phone’s screen. “I have plenty of baking experience under my belt but even this would be way too hard for me to successfully pull off in the first few hundreds of attempts…”

“What, what?” asked Ashido, leaning sideways to peek at Satou’s cell phone. “Did you go check how to make soba? What does it say?”

“He only mixed the buckwheat flour with water, right?” started explaining Satou at the same time as he double-checked the instructions from the internet. “That means he’s aiming for 100% buckwheat soba. The thing is that buckwheat flour doesn’t have any gluten in it. Gluten is what makes flour stick together when moist and gives the dough elasticity while rolling it. Most soba is made with only 80% of buckwheat flour and the rest is wheat flour.”

“So… that means…?” asked Kaminari, an eyebrow slightly arched as

he heard Satou's soba crash course.

"It means that if Bakugou makes the smallest of mistakes, the soba is ruined," said Satou, a dead serious expression on his face. "Or it won't stick together while he's mixing the flour with the water or it will break without a way of fixing it while he's rolling the dough and getting it ready to be cut in noodles. It takes years of experience for professional soba makers to fully master this type of soba!"

"What happens if he actually manages to finish the soba?" asked Iida, also going for his cell phone to check some more information on the matter on his own.

"He'd be achieving the divine move of soba cuisine," declared Satou, his eyes sparkling in excitement.

"Damn, now I'm feeling nervous…" mumbled Kirishima, gulping hard in dry as all of them slowly turned back to the kitchen.

The group on the sofa was in total silence from then on, their eyes glued to the intense solo cooking match being performed in that small portion of the kitchen counter. After a tense, sweat breaking hour, Bakugou dished out two different plates - cold soba for Todoroki and a spicy variant of soba noodles soup for himself.

This is it, inwardly mumbled the group, their breathing rhythm slightly picked up in nervousness and excitement. *This is the moment of truth…!*

"Thanks for the meal," said Todoroki as he grabbed his chopsticks. His heart was pounding inside of his chest. Bakugou had just spent an entire hour of his free time cooking for him - he couldn't think of a single most meaningful way of showing his affection for him.

Hehehe, you're so screwed right now, eerily laughed Bakugou in the back of his mind, leisurely grabbing his chopsticks too as he pretended to ready himself to dig in.

Todoroki gingerly picked up a few noodles of soba, dipped them lightly on the accompanying sauce and happily slurped them up. His chopsticks dropped to the table, one of his hands slowly motioning towards his mouth as he chewed the soba.

D-Did he fail…!? , inwardly yelped the observing group, Kirishima and Sero going as far as to lean themselves even closer to the sofa's backrest. *Is the soba no good…!?*

"Bakugou, marry me?" proposed Todoroki all of a sudden. He motioned his hands forward and tightly grasped the hand Bakugou was using to grab his own pair of chopsticks. "I only need your food for the rest of my life."

"That good, huh?" laughed Bakugou, a wholesome smile blossoming on his lips as he gently ruffled Todoroki's head. He gave a small jerk to his chin while glancing down at Todoroki's plate. "Then hurry up and eat it all. No leftovers allowed."

"I would never," said Todoroki, releasing Bakugou's hand so he could pick up his chopsticks and resume with his dinner. Each mouthful of the homemade soba almost brought him to tears - that was how divine and mind-blowing the taste was.

"Hm… Not bad," noted Bakugou after tasting his portion of the initial batch, softly nodding his head in acknowledgement at the final result. He victoriously smirked at Todoroki as he closely observed him inhaling his meal. "Better than the ones we ate at the restaurant or the

dried soba available at the stores, wouldn't you say?"

"I can't even put them in the same category," deadpanned Todoroki during a short interval between slurping and chewing. "My family register or yours?"

"I'll sleep on it," snorted Bakugou before resuming with his dinner. As he ate his spicy soba noodles soup, he inwardly mumbled, *You're not the only one who gets jealous sometimes, you idiot… Now hurry up eating your soba and hand me over your stomach for life.*

"I… never thought I'd say this but…" breathed Kaminari, a small trickle of drool nearly escaping from his salivating mouth. "I wish I was Todoroki's digestive system right now…"

"Same…" mumbled the group in perfect unison, a couple of stomachs loudly growling for attention and sustenance.

That smile was also unexpectedly cute, inwardly added the starving group, far too scared of the consequences to say it out loud.

Chapter 21

“Todoroki… Wake up…” sluggishly called Bakugou, lightly tugging at Todoroki’s clothes while half laid down on top of him. “Time to get up…”

“Nn…” With a small acknowledging groan followed by a tired yawn, Todoroki slowly aroused into wakefulness. He peered over at Bakugou, who was still completely inert in his koala sleeping position over half of his body. He chuckled. “Your wake up call today isn’t very convincing.”

“Shut up and get up…” grumbled Bakugou, eyes still closed as he continued nestling against his portable AC (not that he needed Todoroki much for that now that the temperature was pleasantly cool). “Get up… get dressed… go out…”

“What time even is right now?” chuckled Todoroki once again. He searched around for his cell phone beside his side of the futon and went to check the time. What he saw made him arch an eyebrow in puzzlement. “Bakugou, we don’t have school today. Why are you waking up so early on our day off?”

“You said you wanted to buy the bigger futon today…” mumbled Bakugou with a sleepy voice. “So let’s hurry up and go…”

“You won’t find any store open at 7 AM on a Sunday,” deadpanned Todoroki, dropping his cell phone on the tatami floor. He gave a yank to the futon’s cover and pulled it over their bodies once again, leisurely hugging Bakugou back as a preparation to return to sleep. “We can go buy the futon in the afternoon, after going out to eat lunch somewhere. So sleep.”

“Don’t wanna…” complained Bakugou, continuing to lightly tug at Todoroki’s clothes amidst their bodies’ tangled positions. He sighed in satisfaction as he started drifting back to his second sleep. “Now…”

“Why are you rushing so much today?” asked Todoroki, lightly kissing the top of Bakugou’s head before leaning the side of his face on it. He removed Bakugou’s hands from his clothes and entwined their fingers in an attempt to disable the last remaining wakefulness from his mind. “You’re still so sleepy you can’t even talk straight. Let’s stay in bed for a while longer and then we can go out shopping. Okay?”

“The shitty pests will… start naggin’ and yappin’ again…” grumbled Bakugou, shaking his head around against the futon to shoo away Todoroki’s face. “Leave now… can keep you to myself… the whole day…”

“I think you’re the one who needs some help getting up today,” chuckled Todoroki, definitely fully awake after hearing such adorably honest words - there was just no winning against cuddly, sleepy Bakugou. He released Bakugou’s hands and circled his waist, hugging him close to his chest while lightly rubbing his nose against Bakugou’s snoozing face. “Bakugou, you want to go out now?”

“Mm…” hummed Bakugou in acknowledgement, a small giggle escaping his lips at the ticklish sensation of Todoroki nuzzling his nose on him. “Stop it, idiot… Hurry up and get up…”

“But I want to stay here a bit longer,” said Todoroki, giving a light peck to his cheek, then another closer to the corner of his lips. As he leaned for a full-fledged kiss, he whispered, “Don’t you want to stay like this for a bit longer to- Ugh!”

“Oh hell no,” growled Bakugou, slapping the palm of his hand on Todoroki’s face to keep it away from his lips. “You’re one hundred

years too early to kiss me with that dirty mouth of yours. Go brush your teeth first! Then you can kiss me!”

“Good morning to you too,” deadpanned Todoroki, blankly staring at the yawing Bakugou from in between his fingers.

“Oh yeah, ‘morning,” said Bakugou, sliding his hand out of Todoroki’s face and planting a quick peck on his cheek before getting out of the futon. He sluggishly stretched his body as he put on his indoor sleepers and walked to the bedroom’s door. “Hurry up getting dressed. I’ll see you downstairs.”

He could hardly talk half a minute ago and yet…, sighed Todoroki in the back of his mind as he observed Bakugou exiting his bedroom from his laid down position on the futon. He was seriously starting to gain an interest in those fast gear changes of his because for as cute as his instant sleep and cuddly bed talk were, they were also quite the deadly weapon - especially when it was cut off just as things were starting to become more intimate.

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By the time Todoroki arrived at the communal area on the ground floor, Bakugou was already sitting down on the sofa, a bored expression on his face as he skipped channel after channel on the TV.

"Ready?" asked Bakugou when he noticed Todoroki's presence. He turned off the TV without a second thought and walked up to the door, all ready and armed to go outside. "Let's eat breakfast outside somewhere. I just want to get out of here before we raise any doom flags like the previous weeke- Mmhn!"

Before he even noticed it, Todoroki had somehow sneaked up on him

from behind, arm wrapped around his waist and hand pulling his face in for a breath-taking kiss.

"You sure are quick at going after what's owed to you," snorted Bakugou, a knowing smirk on his lips as he glanced over his shoulder at Todoroki. "That desperate for a kiss, are we?"

"Whose fault do you think that is?" said Todoroki, a small pout showing on his expressionless demeanour.

"Oh, is it perhaps mine?" asked back Bakugou, faking ignorance on his own prior actions. He grabbed Todoroki's face by the cheeks with one of his hands and lightly squished them. He teasingly said with a sneer, "I am so very sorry that you have no self-control when it comes to koalas."

This little snake… , inwardly grumbled Todoroki, his pouting only getting more accentuated despite himself. There was also no winning against snake mode Bakugou.

“C’mon, let’s go,” said Bakugou, releasing Todoroki’s cheeks at the same time he tapped on the arm circling his waist. “I’m hungry.”

“Okay…” mumbled Todoroki, reluctantly parting from Bakugou’s body. Which was why he couldn’t help but get a small smile on his lips when Bakugou offered him his hand, a sulky embarrassed expression on his face. “Can we go back to bed after all?”

“Get moving already!” growled Bakugou, the sulking readily exchanging for a frown. He grabbed Todoroki’s arm and started dragging him out of the dorm.

“Yeah, yeah,” chuckled Todoroki as he let himself be yanked and ordered around.

From the dorm, they exited the school grounds and walked towards the closest train station. Apart from going somewhere for lunch and buying the futon, they hadn’t made any other plans for their Sunday so they used their visit to a small coffee store next to the station to organise their day while having something for breakfast.

“Is there anything you want to do or a place you want to go?” asked Todoroki after a long sip to his iced coffee.

“Nah, not really,” said Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. He nearly choked on his grilled cheese sandwich when he saw Todoroki blankly staring at him while sipping his coffee. “Oh c’mon, don’t look at me like that! It’s not my fault they’re such noisy little shits 24/7 and it sure as hell ain’t my fault you just randomly decided to kiss me out of the blue with almost one-third of the class as an audience! Think before you act, isn’t that what you’re always nagging me about!?”

“But you told Midoriya you don’t care if others know about it,” pointed out Todoroki, such being the biggest argument he had on his side to explain his behaviour - even if it meant throwing Midoriya under the bus again. Todoroki understood how ridiculous he would sound if he admitted to having done it out of possessiveness, after all. If Bakugou were to accidentally leak his cuteness, now everyone knew they were too late for he had already been taken.

“And I don’t care but those fucking bastards are really starting to test my patience!” grumbled Bakugou, furiously biting a large chunk off of his sandwich. “They’ve been relentless with their annoying interrogatories, constantly asking me about you or about what I’m going to cook next! Dunce Face even had the fuckin’ nerve to call me the ‘ultimate housewife’ yesterday!!”

So that's why he nearly killed Kaminari during the final battle royale exercise, inwardly noted Todoroki as he silently listened to Bakugou venting his frustrations about their classmates. He put his glass down on the table and said, "Isn't that because they find your reactions interesting? I usually just give them a straight answer to whatever they ask me and they go back to what they were doing pretty quickly."

"Well, I'm not that kind-hearted to halfwits," scoffed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. "The next time they start asking me stupid shit, I'll tell them to fuck off on the spot. It's their own fault if they get blasted to the hospital after ignoring that warning."

"I'm not trying to be kind-hearted," said Todoroki with a dead serious expressionless demeanour. "I just get to remind them I'm your boyfriend every time they ask me something about us."

"They're idiots, not patients suffering from short-term memory…" sighed Bakugou, seriously feeling like facepalming himself at that moment. He was starting to get the suspicion that the reason behind all of the annoying interrogatories was whatever half-assed answers Todoroki was providing their classmates with. Knowing how dense Todoroki could be at times, it was a very plausible justification. Which was why he asked, "Hey, Todoroki. What kind of straight answers have you been giving those halfwits?"

"It depends," said Todoroki, tilting his head slightly. "If it's the girls, I just let them do the talking and nod my head a couple of times when needed. But if it's the guys… yes, no or Bakugou's cute."

"Y-You what…!?" gasped Bakugou, slamming his fists on the table's surface. "So you really are the reason why they've become such annoying pests these last few days!! Just what the fuck have you been telling them!? Are you out of your mind!? If you say such a stupid lie

with that annoyingly dense brain of yours, of course they're going to swarm around me searching for answers!! Stop saying I'm cute or I'll fuckin' kill you!!!!"

"Sometimes I think you're the dense one…" sighed Todoroki, taking a slow sip to his iced coffee while staring at Bakugou with a deadpan expression. He sighed once again. "Or maybe you lack self-awareness?"

"Self-awareness on what!?" barked Bakugou, furiously glaring daggers at Todoroki. "Go on! Tell me where I'm lacking self-awareness!! Nowhere, that's where it is! So stop mentioning me at the same time you're uttering that disgusting word! Are you clear!?"

He's so stubborn, inwardly sighed Todoroki, peacefully enjoying the rest of his coffee as he kept on observing Bakugou grumbling to himself while grudgingly finishing the rest of his grilled cheese sandwich. A small smile slowly started tugging at the corner of his lips. *But that part of him is cute too.*

"Returning to what we were originally talking about… what should we do now?" asked Todoroki, deeming that now would be a good time to put that ongoing conversation on halt and stop Bakugou from becoming even more exalted inside of the coffee store. The other few customers and employees wouldn't appreciate it, he was sure. He quickly checked the time on the clock above the barista counter and added, "It's nearly 9 AM. It'll still take a while for most stores to be open. Can you think of someplace you'd want to go until then? Or should we just stay here a while longer?"

"Hm…" Bakugou crossed his arms over his chest and leaned back on his seat to think about Todoroki's question more closely.

Even he was aware they probably left the dorm way too early. But

rather than a day off from school, what he truly needed was a day off from their classmates. If he wanted to avoid their grating questions, then their only choice was to get up early and leave the dorm before anyone else woke up. So other than escaping the dorm as fast as possible, go out somewhere for lunch and buy the futon, Bakugou had absolutely no idea what they were supposed to do for the whole day.

Somewhere we can go right now… , inwardly wondered Bakugou, a small frown starting to crease his brows as he went through all of the known options currently available - something he never thought he'd need to do since, as the practical man he was, he got stuff done as soon as he went out to do it. With such in mind, a location popped out in his brain. "Oh, I know where we can go."

"Where?" asked Todoroki, perking up slightly more at Bakugou's reply.

"It's a secret," said Bakugou, a mischievous smirk on his lips as he got up from his seat.

They exited the coffee store and, after paying a quick visit to the convenience store, they finally went to catch the train. A few stations later, they were getting off at a residential area and a few streets later, they were stopping in front of a dense forest.

"Here?" asked Todoroki, an eyebrow slightly arched as he expressionlessly stared at the bushes and tree branches rustling against the soft wind. Out of all the places that were crossing his mind as he was being led to an unknown location... a forest hadn't been one of them.

"Well, no opening or closing hours, right?" pointed out Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. He went forward and urged Todoroki to follow him through one of the multiple paths that went across that

large forestry terrain. “I’ve been coming here since I learned how to walk so it’s kids friendly enough for a newb like you to not get utterly wrecked. And it’s pretty close to the train station so once it’s time for lunch, it’ll be a piece of cake to get back to civilization.”

If he’s been coming here since he was a child, then that means we’re close to his parent’s house, noted Todoroki in the back of his mind. Now he was regretting not paying much attention to the houses they passed by after getting off at the train station - one of them might have had ‘Bakugou’ written on the nameplate. *I hope he takes me there one day.*

“Did you use to come here with Midoriya?” inquired Todoroki, quickly associating the small pieces of information on Bakugou’s unknown childhood with the one thing he already knew about it.

“Can we *not* talk about Deku right now?” grumbled Bakugou, a sour look immediately creasing his features. “I get pissed off just remembering it.”

“I guess you did use to come here with him, then,” deadpanned Todoroki at the resentful response. “Did you two perhaps stop getting along with each other because of something that happened here?”

“I said *shut up,* ” warned Bakugou, his cold voice reverberating through the silent forest. He slowly looked over his shoulder to peer at Todoroki, his red eyes that of incandescent fury. “Keep talking about it and no one will see your corpse ever aga-”

“AHHHHHHHHHHHHH! It’s the ogre!!” resounded a frightened scream from the middle of the forest. Startled by the sudden cry, Bakugou and Todoroki looked in the direction where it had come from. There, they saw two young girls hugging one another, one of them pointing at Bakugou with a tear-stained expression while screaming, “The ogre is real…! He’s going to eat us!! Waaaaah!”

“Mooooommy! Daaaaddy! Save meeeeee!” loudly cried the other girl, her face buried in her friend’s chest as she grabbed at her clothes for dear life. “Help meeeee! Waaaah!”

“...Huh?” interjected Bakugou, looking at the young children with a completely lost semblance.

“Don’t touch my friends, you evil ogre!!” loudly yelped a young boy, jumping from the middle of the bushes and positioning himself in between the two girls and the ‘ogre’. He picked up a couple of small pebbles from the ground and threw them at the two unknown ‘creatures’. “Leave us alone, ogre! Go to a place far, far, FAR away from here!!”

“Oh.” That was the last thing Bakugou and Todoroki managed to vocalise before the small pebbles hit them and their surroundings started shifting around them in fast motion, a sighting resembling what could be seen if they were travelling through the forest at the speed of light. Once the fast motion stopped, they were at a completely different location.

“Where are we?” asked Todoroki, looking around the new portion of forest area they had seen sent to. Or to be more accurate, teleported to, perhaps? He didn’t quite know, but they were definitely somewhere he had never been before. And since he didn’t know, he turned towards the expert. “Bakugou, do you know where we are?”

“No clue…” mumbled Bakugou, still halfway through processing what had just happened to them. Once the information had been fully analysed, he loudly screamed, “FUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUCK! NOT AGAIN!!”

Chapter 22

“Every single time… Every single fucking time!” grumbled Bakugou to himself, his foot impatiently tapping the ground as he remained sat down on a fallen log while Todoroki walked around that area with his arm raised high in search of a phone signal. “Every time I’m outside with you, something has to happen! I get paired with you for the test of courage during training camp and bam! I get kidnapped by the League of Villains! I go outside with you to attend a hero exhibition and the fucking site gets hacked by an extremist and we’re sent to a shitty dungeon! And now we go out on a fucking date and we end up getting hit by a brat’s Quirk that teleports us to only god knows where!!!”

“So you’re considering today a date?” asked Todoroki, halting all movement to excitedly look at Bakugou with his expressionless face.

“N-Now’s not the time to talk about that, okay!?” barked Bakugou, despite having been him pulling the conversation in that direction during his angry grumbling session. He released a small sigh as an attempt to try to cool down his head a little bit. “Any signal?”

“No…,” said Todoroki, the hand holding his cell phone dropping to the side of his body. “Not even enough signal for emergency calls.”

“Yeah, figured as much,” sighed Bakugou, leaning his body forward as he gained balance to get up from the fallen log. He cracked his fingers loudly, a knowing smirk suddenly popping out on his lips. “Well, time to get out of wherever it is we are.”

“Explosions won’t take us anywhere,” deadpanned Todoroki, carefully eyeing the hands Bakugou was so energetically rubbing together. “You’ll set the entire forest on fire.”

“I already told you I know that! Shit, you sure like to revisit the past in shitty ways!” growled Bakugou, throwing a small furious glare at Todoroki. “I’ll let you know I’ve never once set a single forest on fire and I’ve been to many of them! No need for explosions to get out of here!”

“How can we find the way back then?” asked Todoroki, lifting his cell phone to point at it with his free hand. “Our cell phones are useless. We can’t even check the GPS app for a location. And since we don’t know where we are, the offline maps in it are also completely useless.”

“Kids these days only know how to rely on technology… is what the old farts from a few centuries ago would say,” scoffed Bakugou, his smirk returning to his face. “I gotta agree with that. How exactly can a person even get lost in a forest when you have a map right above you all day long? Night too, if you’re feeling adventurous enough to spend the night in the middle of nowhere.”

“The sun?” said Todoroki, an eyebrow slightly arched as he glanced up to the sky. “I guess it makes sense.”

“And Japan is a god damned island,” added Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. “Whether we follow the sun towards the west or east, we’ll eventually reach the sea. And the sea means people. And people means trains or buses or some shit like that to take us back to Tokyo. Not that I think we’re all that far from there. There’s no way that brat’s Quirk is strong enough to send us all the way to Hokkaido or Okinawa or a fucking desert island.”

“You’re taking this in a surprisingly calm way now,” deadpanned Todoroki, blankly staring at Bakugou. “You were so angry half an hour ago, you were mistaken for an ogre by some passing by kids.”

“That’s your fucking fault for sticking your nose where it doesn’t fucking belong!!” roared Bakugou, his raging glare once again inflaming his red eyes. “Don’t think that dating me gives you the right to mess around with stuff that’s none of your business! If I tell you to shut up about Deku, you fucking shut up about Deku! Period! I also don’t- ...Shit! I shouldn’t have brought you there. I had completely forgotten about it but then you went out of your way to remember me about shitty stuff I don’t want to fucking think about, at least for a damned day!”

“Sorry…” apologised Todoroki, reaching out to Bakugou to hold his hand. “I was being too nosy about you and Midoriya.”

“Hmph!” Bakugou looked the other way, his brows slightly twisted into a pout. “I told you that puppy eyes don’t work on me. Repent on what you did. I’ll be thinking about whether I forgive you or not while we’re getting out of here.”

“Okay,” acknowledged Todoroki, a small smile on his lips as he changed his hold to Bakugou’s hand and briefly entwined their fingers before releasing him. He wasn’t sure about the ‘puppy eyes’ not working on Bakugou but he at least knew he was understanding enough to receive an honest apology. It didn’t work for everyone, though, so it was more a matter of who apologised than the apology itself. Bakugou had a bigger soft spot for Todoroki than he admitted to. “To get back to Tokyo, we should head towards the North Pacific coastline. So that means we need to follow the sun in the opposite direction?”

“Obviously,” scoffed Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. “Piece of cake, right? A huge pain in the ass but it could be worse. At least it’s not another fucking useless dungeon…”

“Have you ever gotten lost in a forest before?” asked Todoroki as they started walking towards the direction where the sun had risen from. “You seem to be very familiar with what to do in this kind of

circumstances.”

“Do I look like the type of person who gets lost anywhere?” asked back Bakugou, a dead serious expression as he looked at Todoroki. “I just know the obvious. Who the heck doesn’t know the sun rises from the east and sets in the west? Who doesn’t know a river always ends or in a bigger river or at the sea, both places that usually have people living nearby? Only idiots get lost in a forest!”

“What if we’ve been teleported to a desert island?” deadpanned Todoroki, sideways glancing at Bakugou to see what kind of response he’d get this time. A desert island, huh… As a short term incident, it wouldn’t be that bad. But there’s no way he’d be able to eat Bakugou’s home-cooked meals if that happened, was there?

“Don’t jinx us!” grumbled Bakugou, quickly checking his cell phone to see if there was any signal yet. “We’re already unlucky enough as it is whenever we go somewhere together, don’t ask for even bigger disasters to happen. Damn it, I even tried to keep all annoyances out of our way by getting us to leave super early. If I knew this was going to happen, I would have stayed in bed with you and sneaked out of the dorm through the window or some shit like that…”

“Wouldn’t that be going a bit too far?” chuckled Todoroki, finding Bakugou’s pouty grumbling to be so endearing. “Just do what you always do and tell them to go away. Or ignore them.”

“Or blast them to the hospital for a couple of weeks…” sighed Bakugou, an annoyed frown on his brows. He smacked his closed fist in the palm of his hand and furiously ground it there. “I should have shut them all up during the battle royale exercises! If only a certain someone hadn’t made me so sleep deprived throughout most of last week…”

“Me?” asked Todoroki, pointing at himself with a head slightly tilted to the left. “But you were the one who was continuously refusing to sleep with me once the heatwave ended. Your sleep deprivation problem has been solved now that you’ve started sleeping in my bedroom, right?”

“I guess,” said Bakugou, a satisfied grin appearing on his lips out of the blue. “It’s a huge pain in the ass having to wait for you to get in the futon too to be able to sleep but damn if it doesn’t feel good. ‘Guess this is what it means to be worth the wait.”

The sudden bout of honesty had caught Todoroki so out of guard the only thing he could do was stare at Bakugou in surprise while his heart went for a high-speed ride inside of his ribcage. How come no one until this day had noticed how adorable the ferocious beast was when in a good mood? For as convenient as it was for Todoroki, it was still hard to believe that people were that blind to Bakugou’s good sides.

He did say he only became seemingly cute whenever I was concerned so does that mean it’s my fault that others might start taking more notice of his good sides?, inwardly wondered Todoroki, his gaze still stuck to the small remnants of that precious smile on Bakugou’s face. That possibility felt somewhat bittersweet. Of course, he loved seeing all of Bakugou and if others were to learn how much of a good person he was when compared to their initial impression of a savage who blew up with anything and anyone, then he definitely appreciated those little changes in him. But at the same time, it felt like he was sharing more that he felt comfortable with.

Was this just a temporary worry due to the recent change in the type of relationship they shared? Or was it something he would have to learn to deal with? Todoroki didn’t know yet.

“Bakugou, have you ever shared the bed with someone other than me?” asked Todoroki, this time him being the one taking a quick peek

at his cell phone. The inclination of that area seemed to point that they were going up so there was a chance they would have better signal up there. Unfortunately, it was still as bad as after they got teleported to the unknown area.

"Huh? Of course not," scoffed Bakugou, picking up his pace a bit to reach the top of that hill faster. If they were anywhere close to civilization, they'd be able to spot it from there. If they were in the middle of nowhere, he at least would finally know how screwed they were. "I don't even sleep in the same room as other people unless I'm on a field trip or training camp. Or nap time during kindergarten. Ugh… Now I'm the one remembering annoying crap…"

"Midoriya again?" chuckled Todoroki, already aware that his question was right on point by the look of disgust on Bakugou's face alone.

"The little shit had the habit of dragging his futon next to where I was taking my nap," grumbled Bakugou, a vein nearly popping out on his forehead just remembering about those nightmarish days. "Then he'd just creepily laugh it off whenever I asked him when the fuck did he get there after I woke up!"

"I need to have a talk with Midoriya," deadpanned Todoroki, the air around the left side of his body rippling and wrapping due to the heat being emitted from him.

"Ahahahaha! By all means, do have a talk with him," laughed Bakugou, halting his walking on top of the hill. He then turned around at Todoroki, a knowing smirk tugging at the corner of his lips in pure mischief. "The spot for bully number 2 is still vacant and I'd say you're starting to become a strong candidate to claim it. How about we gang up on him and have him apologise for all of his creepy stalker behaviour up until date? Because believe me when I say there's a lot more of that crap from where that one came from. I just won't mention any of it now or it'll become a contest of endurance between us to see who sets the forest on fire first. The angry me… or the

jealous you.”

“I wouldn’t bully a friend,” said Todoroki, forcing both mind and body to cool down with the help of his right side. “Though I do want to hear more about your childhood days with Midoriya.”

“Don’t push it,” softly growled Bakugou, immediately turning his back on Todoroki to go make a round on the hilltop. Apart from greenery and more hills, there wasn’t much to see around that area. No traces of houses or other buildings, no visible rivers. They could spot the sea further ahead in the direction they had been walking towards so the sun orientation had been working perfectly so far. He put his hand on his pocket and fished the two energy bars he had purchased on his quick visit to the convenience store. “Wanna take a quick break before we aim for the sea?”

“Sure,” acknowledged Todoroki, easily catching the energy bar when it was thrown at him. He took a seat by a nearby tree, using its large trunk as a backrest - it didn’t take Bakugou half a minute to follow suit and leisurely take a seat next to him. “How long do you think it’ll take us to reach the sea?”

“Two hours, give and take,” said Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders as he started undoing the energy bar’s wrapper. “Maybe more since we don’t have any water on us.”

“We always have my ice,” pointed out Todoroki, creating a small piece of ice on the palm of his right hand. “They’ll melt fast if I create them smaller than ice cubes.”

“Yeah, I’m not drinking that,” refused Bakugou right away, halting his unwrapping motions to stare at the piece of ice being offered to him. “Unlike my nitroglycerin, I have no idea where that ice comes from. That’s the last part of you I want in me.”

“I… don’t think it’d do you any harm,” explained Todoroki, looking down at his hand as he digested Bakugou’s words. “I just froze the humidity in the air?”

“Nah, I’m good,” denied Bakugou once again, taking a bite of his energy bar while staring in the far-away sea’s direction.

“It’s oxidane in its solid state of matter,” deadpanned Todoroki, picking up the piece of ice and motioning it towards Bakugou. “Are you sure you don’t want it?”

“I already said I don’t-” barked Bakugou, only to have the small frozen chunk inserted in his mouth all of a sudden. His body shuddered at the sensation of the coldness sliding against his tongue, face turning beet red in contrast as he pushed it away against the inside of his cheek and turned his head towards Todoroki at the speed of light. “I tol’ yu I didn’ wan’ it!”

“Sorry, my hand slipped,” deadpanned Todoroki, innocently starting to unwrap his own energy bar.

“Grrr…” softly growled Bakugou, his gaze tightening as he eyed the satisfied expression on Todoroki’s face. He strongly crunched the piece of ice with his teeth and leaned sideways, his mouth wide open to take a large bite off of Todoroki’s energy bar. He slyly licked his lower lip after taking his time chewing the stolen bite, never breaking eye contact with Todoroki as he did so. “Sorry, my mouth slipped.”

“Can your mouth slip again?” asked Todoroki, pointing at his lips with his free hand. “I think you missed the mark.”

“No, I definitely didn’t miss anything,” snorted Bakugou, mischievously nibbling at the rest of his energy bar. “You, on the other hand, missed the perfect opportunity to put something else in my mouth.”

“Can we redo this just one more time?” appealed Todoroki, leaning closer to Bakugou in expectation for a positive reply. “Please?”

“Better luck next time,” teasingly said Bakugou, pretending to not take any notice of Todoroki’s beckoning gaze.

“Baku-”

“No.”

Chapter 23

A hill and a good hour of walking later, Bakugou and Todoroki reached a well-delineated dirt road, used as a path for hikers and other nature advocates. Following the road in the same sea direction they were aiming for from the very beginning, they once again reached civilization shortly after, as well as all the buildings, public transportation and food that came associated with it. It also made Bakugou realise how wrong he had been about the Quirk incident and its strength.

“Shit, I can’t believe we ended up all the way in Ibaraki prefecture…” grumbled Bakugou to himself as he checked his cell phone for more info on Tajiricho, Hitachi - in particular train or bus connections back to Tokyo within that day. “The brat sure has a promising future with that Quirk…”

“Did you find a way back?” asked Todoroki, exiting a convenience store with two bottles of cold water on his hands. He passed one of them to Bakugou, readily downing half of his afterwards. “Are there any trains to Tokyo from here or should we call Aizawa-sensei for some backup?”

“Are you crazy? Aizawa-sensei would murder us if we reported a Quirk incident two weekends in a row,” snorted Bakugou, also greedily drinking his water. “Let’s just pretend we came here on purpose for some shit. Like a hiking adventure with a beach ending or something.”

“Our date sure took an unexpected turn,” deadpanned Todoroki, taking a seat on the bench next to Bakugou. “From a shopping trip in Tokyo to hiking in Ibaraki.”

“For sure,” laughed Bakugou, finishing the rest of his water. “Though

it's not that bad either. Actually, I think it's been going great so far since I like hiking and mountain climbing. Well, apart from your butting in stuff that doesn't have anything to do with you, of course."

"I already said sorry," mumbled Todoroki with a small pout puffing out his cheeks.

"Anyways," chuckled Bakugou, rolling his eyes around just the slightest at Todoroki's expression. He gave him his cell phone, the railways map showing on the screen. "There's a train connection from Ogitsu train station to Tokyo through the Joban Line. But it's a local train so it'll take us an eternity to get back. We can also go to the next train station, the one in central Hitachi, and catch one of the two limited express trains to Tokyo. But it's a long walk there from here. Or we can mix the two by catching a train in Ogitsu and switch to the express one in Hitachi. What do you wanna do?"

"Lunch and the beach," said Todoroki instead of picking one of the return options. Upon noticing Bakugou's confused expression, he lightly shrugged his shoulders and added, "If we're going to lie about the Quirk incident, we might as well sound believable on it. We can return to Tokyo once we walk around here for a while longer."

"We might not be able to get back in time to buy the futon if we stay at Tajiricho for too long," pointed out Bakugou, giving a quick check to the two station's train timetables. "It's a Sunday, there's not a lot of connections."

"We can always go out again on our next day off from school," said Todoroki with a small affirmative nod of his head. "I'm not in a rush to buy the futon. It's only to keep you from using the lack of space as an excuse to not sleep with me."

"You have such a wacky sense of opportunism," snorted Bakugou,

putting his cell phone back in his pants' pocket and getting up from the bench. He lightly stretched his arms over his head, readying himself for a bit more of walking. "Well, whether you buy the futon today or next week, I don't think it'll change much. It's not the futon or the bed that does the trick, it's your body. Shall we look for a place to eat while we're walking to the nearest beach?"

"I'd like cold soba but I'm also open to suggestions," requested Todoroki, also getting up from the bench. As they started walking in the sea's direction, he positioned himself next to Bakugou and casually slid his hand against his.

"Of course you do," laughed Bakugou, holding Todoroki's hand in return. "It won't be as good as mine, though."

"I'll have yours for dinner," said Todoroki, a small smile settling itself on his lips as they leisurely walked through the streets of Tajiricho.

They didn't know anything about that area so they kept taking lefts and rights while navigating their way towards the sea. It was mostly a residential area, with few buildings being used for large scale commerce and even fewer residents out for walks during lunchtime. However, even a remote location wouldn't make Todoroki's earthly desires budge.

"I smell soba," announced Todoroki out of the blue, halting his walking without any warning. He picked up his pace, pulling Bakugou along with him as he made a direct bee-line to a small diner on the ground floor of a two-storied building, the second floor being used for residential purposes. "They serve soba here."

"Are you a freakin' dog or something…?" groaned Bakugou, slightly weirded out by Todoroki's sharp sense of smell when it came to his favourite food. No matter how much he sniffed the air, there was

nothing that could hint him soba, in specific, anywhere. Food, yes, but definitely not soba. He sighed. “Wanna eat lunch here then?”

“Yeah,” acknowledged Todoroki, his mismatched eyes sparkling in excitement. As they were opening the wooden sliding door, he momentarily halted once again. “Oh, this one doesn’t count. I said it’d be my treat this weekend so your soba debt remains as it is. Order as much spicy food as you want.”

“Diners usually don’t have that much spicy in their menus,” scoffed Bakugou, rolling his eyes around as he pulled Todoroki with him inside of the soba noodles diner.

The old couple running the cosy diner warmly welcomed the two students, quickly bringing them their orders to the table: cold soba with a side dish of vegetable tempura and a bowl of curry udon. The freshness of the dishes and their hunger from walking so much through the forest made their meals disappear from before their eyes in a matter of minutes.

Since they still had more than enough space for dessert, the friendly owners recommended them to pay a visit to the pastry shop a few houses down the next street. Sweet lovers or not, neither Bakugou nor Todoroki managed to resist the sight of fluffy Japanese cheesecake slices fresh out of the oven - and to Bakugou’s chagrin, he was yet again accused of being ‘cute’ as he ferociously wolfed down his dessert. Not that Todoroki had been any different from him.

“Haa… I might have stuffed myself a bit too much there,” satisfactorily sighed Bakugou, their next stop already visible as they reached the end of the street. The salty scent of the seawater wafted all around them, brought to dry land by the gentle sea breeze. Seagulls occasionally loudly crackled their presence in the sky. And last but not least, the sound of the waves gradually growing closer and closer with each step they took forward. “Do I regret it? Fuck no! Today’s lunch made getting lost in the woods totally worth it.”

“You should learn how to bake Japanese cheesecake next,” suggested Todoroki, softly chuckling to himself afterwards. “Even the other customers at the pastry shop were finding your reactions to our desert adorable.”

“I don’t think it was me those chicks were ogling, you dense idiot…” grumbled Bakugou under his breath, a few creases on his brow to shape a frown. He gave a kick to Todoroki’s shin, nearly tripping him in the process, and bolted down the stairs that connected the road to the beach.

“Why did you kick me?” asked Todoroki, observing from a certain distance as Bakugou stomped down the stairs.

“Just felt like it!” roared Bakugou, grudgingly stuffing his hands in his pants’ pockets as he walked further away through the sand. “Hurry it up! Didn’t you want to see the beach before leaving?”

Still not understanding what had angered Bakugou so suddenly, Todoroki rushed over down the stairs and into the beach to catch up with him once again. The sound of the waves on its low tide was much louder in that area, even if the sea was calm and sparkly blue. Though he wasn’t a big outdoors enthusiast, Todoroki regretted just a little bit that the beach season had long ended. Spending a whole day with Bakugou at the beach during summertime would surely wind up being yet another adventure to remember.

“I want to see you with swimming trunks on,” blurted out Todoroki as he stopped next to Bakugou and stared away at the sea with a certain longing in his eyes.

“You have seen me with swimming trunks on,” said Bakugou, an

eyebrow slightly arched as he wondered what the heck was going on inside of Todoroki's head to say such random things out of the blue. "The swimming pool training, remember?"

"Oh, right," acknowledged Todoroki, tilting his head to the left as he recalled the events of that summer day. "We never got to settle between you, me and Midoriya who was the fastest swimmer."

"Is that a challenge I'm hearing?" snorted Bakugou, a knowing smirk slowly surfacing on his lips. He turned his body to get face to face with Todoroki while pointing at the sea. "Perfect timing, then. We have plenty of water at our disposal."

"Bakugou, it's too cold to swim in the sea," deadpanned Todoroki, inwardly releasing a sigh. He couldn't quite understand which part of what he said had been meant as a challenge but there were so many different reasons why it would be a completely ridiculous idea that he decided to verbalise them all in hopes that Bakugou would back off. "We're not allowed to use our Quirks outside of school grounds. And if we were, it would be environmentally wrong for me to heat up the sea with my fire. We also don't have swimming trunks. Last but not least, Midoriya's not here right now."

"Coward…" grumbled Bakugou with an annoyed click of his tongue. "The water might be cold but we didn't even go inside of the swimming pool during the competition…"

"I'll race you to your heart's content next time we go to a swimming pool or the beach," reassured Todoroki with an expressionless thumbs up. "If it's hot enough to swim at the time, of course."

"I hate it so much when you do that!" barked Bakugou, grabbing Todoroki's head to angrily ruffle his red and white hair all over the place. "You always, always try to reason shit out with me with that

annoying blank face of yours! Stop being such a rational goodie-two-shoes and go wild to the world! Just say a big ‘fuck you’ to everything else and get selfish already, you prick!”

“You already do plenty of that for the two of us,” deadpanned Todoroki, completely motionless as his head steadily became more and more of a bird’s nest. “If I were to stop keeping you under control and join your faction, it might spell disaster for everyone around us.”

“Fuck you!” hissed Bakugou, giving a quick slap to the back of Todoroki’s head as he released his hair. “Fine! Then race me on the sand. Let’s see who can reach that end of the beach first!”

“Why?” sighed Todoroki, his hands busy trying to comb his hair into a decent appearance. “Wouldn’t it be better to take a seat somewhere and enjoy the scene-”

“GO!” announced Bakugou out of the blue, immediately darting running towards the direction he had settled the end goal to be. As the distance between the two of them grew bigger and bigger, he added, “Whoever wins gets to make the other do whatever they want!”

“I’m going to make you cook soba for me forever,” declared Todoroki, sprinting through the sand as fast as he could to catch up - and overtake - the cheating blonde.

“You wish!” scoffed Bakugou, accelerating his running pace even further. “The only thing I’m gonna feed you is my dust!”

Despite giving his best to surpass him, Bakugou’s advantageous headstart turned out to be fatal for Todoroki’s success in the sudden race. He reached the end of the beach a good dozen of seconds behind Bakugou.

“I… haa… win!” victoriously declared Bakugou, slowly lowering his body towards the sand to take a rest and slow down both breathing rhythm and heartbeat after the long run. “How did my dust taste? Haa… Delicious too?”

“Haa… You cheated..” said Todoroki, just as out of breath as Bakugou was. He also dropped his body on the sand, lying down next to where Bakugou had taken a seat at.

“Boo-hoo~ I cheat during official class exercises but Bakugou is the big, bad meanie for cheating during a race through the beach,” whined Bakugou with a taunting voice, a fake pouting inflating his cheeks. He wiped the sweat running down the side of his face with the back of his hand and dropped it back down to the sand. “Or what, do you wanna have a rematch? So do I! Now shut up and take the loss home with you.”

“...What is it that you want me to do…?” mumbled Todoroki, him the one truly pouting in that situation.

“I’ll keep it in stock to use at a later time,” mischievously said Bakugou, leaning over Todoroki’s laid down upper body. He lightly kissed his lips and satisfactorily grinned at him. “And you can bet it will be used when you least expect it. Tremble in fear until then.”

“You should do it now and get it over with,” pointed out Todoroki, sitting back up on the sand now that he had gotten a little bit of rest. Staring straight at Bakugou’s eyes, he deadpanned, “I might forget about it and you then end up as the ultimate loser from this race.”

“Does your memory suck that much?” scoffed Bakugou, rolling his eyes around. Todoroki was still too much of a newbie when it came to

the arts of threatening and verbal manipulation. “Or is our date not being memorable enough to stick around for long in your brain?”

“I’ll take the loss home with me…” groaned Todoroki, his head dropping down in utter defeat.

“Yeah, I figured as much,” laughed Bakugou, hitting Todoroki’s arm with his shoulder. “C’mon, loser. It’s time we catch a train and return to the land of annoying pests.”

Chapter 24

"We managed to return faster than I was expecting," noted Todoroki as they exited the bustling train station and into the populated streets of Central Tokyo. It was a little bit past 4 PM, a considerably decent hour of arrival after being teleported to such a random location out of the blue.

"That's express trains for you, I guess," said Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. "Though they're overly expensive for what they are. Shit, there goes my budget for the month! That damned bed is getting further and further away!"

"Or you can forget about the bed, use your bedroom for storage purposes only and permanently sleep in mine," suggested Todoroki, a dead serious expression on his face as he made the outrageous proposal. "You've only been going to your room to change clothes and do school work lately, haven't you?"

"Sometimes I really wonder which one of us has a sleep addiction…" sighed Bakugou, observing the expectant glint in Todoroki's mismatched eyes with an eyebrow slightly arched. Now that he thought about it, Todoroki had always been the one pushing the sharing bed agenda even before Bakugou discovered he had developed a certain sleeping habit that, when not fulfilled, left him unable to fall asleep. However, Todoroki hadn't become the same type of sleep-deprived wreck he had during the couple of days he stubbornly refused to sleep together with him - if anything, he only had some slightly restless nights. "Do you like sleeping with me that much?"

"I do," acknowledged Todoroki without any hesitation. "It's reassuring to sleep next to you."

"I'm not a fuckin' security blanket!" hissed Bakugou, quickly whipping

his head the other way to keep the soft blush staining his cheeks from being noticed. Todoroki and his dense honesty should have come together with a ‘how to deal with’ manual because Bakugou had no clue how to do it without making a complete fool of himself. Which he hated. He so very much hated it and yet he fell for it every single damn time.

“Bakugou?” called Todoroki, his head tilted to the left as he kept staring at Bakugou’s back.

“Argh, geez! Forget it!” yelled Bakugou, angrily turning around to face Todoroki once again. He forced his face to scrunch up into a glare - all passersby should be thinking of him as a gangster trying to extort money out of a random victim but who cares? “Wanna go buy the futon now or should we give up for today and go back to the dorm? You have 2 seconds to make your decision and it’s counting already!!”

“Let’s finish what we came here to do,” said Todoroki, not even slightly fazed by Bakugou’s demon-like expression. He casually took his cell phone from his pocket and went to check the GPS app. “This area should have plenty of stores that sell them. Let’s go to the closest one and buy the futon.”

“Yeah…” grumbled Bakugou under his breath, his frown partially melting away with it. He stuffed his hands on his pants’ pockets and walked next to Todoroki as he led them to the nearest store that featured futons in their stock. “Do you still have enough money on you, after all the train travelling expenses?”

“Yeah, I’m sure I do,” acknowledged Todoroki with a small nod of his head. “Futons aren’t that expensive, right?”

“As expected of the son of the former number two hero,” scoffed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. “If I wasn’t so keen on buying my own

stuff, I'd have you pay for my bed too."

"Or you could permanently sleep in my bedroom," pointed out Todoroki once again, blankly staring at Bakugou as he did so. He knew only that wouldn't make the stubborn koala succumb to his request but any attempt was a good attempt. "Problem solved, right?"

"That's it, we're so gonna sleep in my room tonight!" declared Bakugou, greeting the side of Todoroki's torso with a sharp elbow strike. "If you push me out of my bed again, I'll teach you how to fly by pushing you out of the balcony!"

"Or you could sleep on the side of the bed that's next to the wall," suggested Todoroki, recalling that Bakugou had mentioned he didn't mind sleeping glued to either side of his body. "It's already cold enough for you to use the left side of my body."

"Oh yeah, that's true. I'd have double kicking out veto power if we did that," noted Bakugou, a scheming smirk starting to shape the corner of his lips up. "Do I even need to buy a bigger bed at this point? My current sleeping position is half on top of you, half on top of the futon or mattress or whatever it might be. A small bed would make it easier to push you out as wake up call. I swear to god that if you say 'or you could' one more time, I'll use the rope and duct tape to tie you up before bedtime!"

"I was going to say we're here," deadpanned Todoroki, pointing with his thumb to the store on their left. "I do think today's wake up call was the most effective one of them all so far, though."

"Huh? I don't remember doing anything special this morning," said Bakugou, completely lost on what Todoroki had meant with that small comment.

He truly has no self-awareness, inwardly sighed Todoroki, pushing the furniture store's door open so that the final shopping spree could officially begin.

The store was busily filled with couples and families browsing through the available furniture displays of the several household divisions. It wasn't the type of store one could usually find two high school-aged boys walking around and the questioning glances they received from some staff members showed it. Not that any of them approached them, as they were browsing through the available futon selection just as leisurely as any of the other older customers.

"Bakugou, I think someone has inflated the prices in this store," deadpanned Todoroki, his brain censoring the total count of digits displayed in all price tags. "There are far too many zeros in all of them."

"You didn't expect a double futon to have the same price as bedsheets, right?" snorted Bakugou, dropping down his body on top of one of the futons currently being promoted on the display area. When he glanced up and noticed the crushed expression on Todoroki's face, he couldn't help but burst out laughing. "Ahahahahaha! You totally did, didn't you? So that's where your confidence in strolling inside a furniture store a few days after deciding to buy one came from! Ahahahaha! How much of an idiot are you? Ahahahaha!"

"I never bought one, how was I supposed to know they're just as expensive as a bed?" pointed out Todoroki, his shoulders dropping down in defeat.

"They'd definitely never be as fuckin' cheap as bedsheets," said Bakugou, his body rolling over the futon as he tried to keep his loud laughter in check. "Out of everything that could happen inside of this store, hearing that one was the last thing I was expecting.

Ahahahaha!”

“You’re laughing a bit too much…” grumbled Todoroki under his breath, a small frown on his brows. But it was hard to stay angry or sulk when Bakugou was having that much fun on his own. Laughter was a contagious type of happiness. He took a seat next to Bakugou and sighed, “I guess we won’t be taking a futon home with us today, after all.”

Without any warning, a hand yanked at the back of Todoroki’s upper clothes and pulled him down against the futon. The store turned pitch-black when the futon’s cover fell over them, muffling the busy sounds all around them.

“I told you whether you bring the futon back with you today or not, it wouldn’t change anything, didn’t I?” whispered Bakugou against Todoroki’s lips before diving in for a long kiss. “They’re real roomy and nice, though, so do your best to get one of these somewhere in the near future. I prefer to play house in an actual bedroom, not in the middle of a store.”

“Then what’s with you and your habit of seducing me in public places?” whispered back Todoroki, slowly groping the dark until his hand gently landed on Bakugou’s face. His thumb lightly traced Bakugou’s smirking lips but feeling or seeing wasn’t needed for Todoroki to know that mischievousness was present. “Save it for the wak-”

“Fuck, it’s too hard to breathe under that!!” huffed Bakugou, jolting up from underneath the futon’s cover as fast as lightning. He looked over at Todoroki and his judgmental blank stare, and a snort broke free amidst giggling couples and children’s running footsteps. “What? You got like *that* just because Deku was sleeping on the bed next to mine at the infirmary. I can’t have you burn the entire store down after freezing all of these extras to death.”

“I can no longer tell if you lack self-awareness or if you just enjoy torturing me,” deadpanned Todoroki, sitting up on the futon with a tired sigh.

“Oh, I definitely enjoy torturing you,” mischievously said Bakugou. He positioned himself in front of Todoroki and gave a small jerk with his chin towards the store’s entrance door. “C’mon, nothing else to do here so it’s time to go back to the dorm. Let’s play house somewhere where both stalking nerds and annoying extras can’t bother us.”

“Don’t call it ‘playing house’,” sighed Todoroki, half-hiding his face with his hand as he got up from the display futon too.

“You want me to be more explicit than that in a family-friendly store?” laughed Bakugou as he grabbed Todoroki by the shoulders. He leaned forward and placed his lips a stone’s throw away from his ear. What he whispered made Todoroki go from pouting to dragging Bakugou out of the store at the speed of light.

“Bakugou, you don’t have to worry about tonight’s dinner,” said Todoroki, holding Bakugou’s hand tight while they rushed past through the store’s customers to the door.

“Is that your way of saying you’ll be eating me for dinner?” asked Bakugou with a snort, pushing the door open so they could escape to the street and get back to the train station right away.

“At this rate, I’ll eat you for afternoon tea and supper-” declared Todoroki, sideways glancing at Bakugou with hungry eyes. He shouldn’t have, though, for he ended up crashing against something far too small to be seen from that angle. “...too…”

“Nooo! The ogres are back!” cried out one of the young girls from earlier that morning, her small frame slumped down on the ground after bumping against one of the ‘monsters’. “And they’re going to eat me for afternoon tea…! Waaaaah!”

“Eh?” interjected Todoroki and Bakugou at the same time, stock-still as they observed the little girl bawling her eyes out. If she was there, then that meant…

“I’m not gonna let you eat my friend, you evil ogres!!!” yelled the same young boy as before, running at full speed to his friend’s aid. He stretched his arms forward in front of his small body, eyes slightly tear-stained in fear as he loudly screamed, “Go away! Go away to a much, much, much, MUCH further away place and don’t come back!”

“No, wait, you damned brat!” yelped Bakugou, furiously shaking his head in denial as he and Todoroki tried to come up with a plausible explanation for this whole mess. “We’re not-”

“Go away!!” yelled the young boy, using as much strength as his thin arms could muster to push both Todoroki’s and Bakugou’s bodies away from his weeping friend.

“Ogres…” mumbled Bakugou as he and Todoroki fell backwards, the city landscape around them rushing past them in a blur until it became a completely different scenery. Rather than rough cement, what their rears came crashing against was soft, warm sand. Loads and loads of sand, whichever direction they looked at.
“.....What?”

“I… hope we’re at Tottori sand dunes…” said Todoroki, blinking his eyes a couple of times in utter disbelief. Such a small child couldn't teleport them all the way to a desert, the nearest one being in China. Seagulls were flying in the sky over them so they were surely being

greeted and welcomed to the Sea of Japan, in the exact opposite direction of the sea landscape they had partaken that morning. With all of the earlier desire sucked out of his body due to the second Quirk incident of the day, Todoroki deadpanned, “Bakugou, how many hours of train travel will it be this time?”

“AAAAAAAAARGH! YOU’VE GOTTA BE FUCKIN’ KIDDING ME!!!!”

Chapter 25

“We are so screwed…” groaned Bakugou, all strength nearly leaving his body upon seeing U.A. High School’s main gate locked shut. Todoroki only silently stared at the thick metal gate with an expressionless face that hinted an ‘I knew this was going to happen’. He stomped his foot on the floor while loudly groaning once again, “We are so fuckin’ screwed now!”

To recapitulate the last 9 hours of their lives... Bakugou and Todoroki experienced a second Quirk accident from the exact same source; which was how they ended up being teleported to a semi-desertic region in Japan over 500 km away from Tokyo. Unlike the previous incident, the scenery easily enabled them to locate themselves and, as the touristic area that it was, they also easily reached civilization once again.

Their problems started when they discovered that the only way to return to Tokyo from Tottori was to catch a 1-hour flight or a 5 to 9-hours train trip. Being a weekend, all seats in all connecting flights had already been booked, with a very low probability of two of them becoming vacant. And, again, being a weekend, there were very few train connections. Luckily, they managed to buy two tickets for the train about to depart from Tottori Station and, a little bit over six hours later due to unexpected delays and after crossing nearly one-third of the main Japanese island, they once again arrived at Tokyo Station at the break of midnight.

Bakugou and Todoroki immediately went for the local train line and got off at the train station nearest to their school but it was far too late already. The main gate had long been locked, as the curfew rules from the dorms dictated.

“No other choice but to call Aizawa-sensei now,” sighed Todoroki, fetching his cell phone from his pocket. He was browsing through his contact list when the electronic device was snatched away from his

hand.

“Wait,” said Bakugou, swiftly putting Todoroki’s cell phone in his pocket as he started walking down the street while urging Todoroki to follow him. “If we call Aizawa-sensei, we’re guaranteed to be grounded for the rest of the school year for breaking the curfew *and* for not reporting the two Quirk incidents as soon as they happened.”

“If we spend the whole night out we’ll only be making the situation even worse, Bakugou,” warned Todoroki, following after Bakugou with a certain hesitation. “We might as well admit defeat now and accept whatever punishment Aizawa-sensei gives us.”

“Yeah, no, thanks,” scoffed Bakugou, his red eyes attentively gazing at the tall wall surrounding the school’s perimeter, despite all of their tiredness and sleepiness. “When I was running through the school grounds the other night, I found a way in and out through the wall.”

“Breaking and entering our own school,” deadpanned Todoroki, inwardly sighing at Bakugou’s villainous strategising. He was aware that it would probably be safer to call their teacher and admit their wrongdoings but the problem was convincing Bakugou of the same. The idea of not asking for Aizawa’s help had been rooted deep in his mind since earlier that morning. “But isn’t there a barrier surrounding the school’s perimeter? It will warn the school staff someone is trying to infiltrate and we’ll get in even bigger trouble.”

“The barrier is off right now,” said Bakugou after quickly checking the time on Todoroki’s cell phone.

“How do you know that?” asked Todoroki, an eyebrow getting slightly arched in utter surprise at hearing that unknown detail. He didn’t even know how Bakugou was aware of it when all they’ve been told is that the school’s security had been levelled up to governmental levels

after a certain explosive blonde had been kidnapped by a certain villain group - and the one with a knack to gain the attention of the unsavoury lot should be the last person to know details about said security system.

“I went for a really long run that night,” groaned Bakugou, inwardly cringing just remembering how desperate he was to tire himself out and how he ended up slipping out of the school grounds through the hole he found by chance. That’s how he ended up discovering that the barrier was only active in particularly high-risk areas after a certain hour deep in the night. He came to a halt all of a sudden. “This is the place.”

Bakugou made a sharp turn to his right and stepped inside of an empty lot for sale, its walled side decorated by loads of wood plaques and leftover construction material from whatever building used to occupy it. He cleared the trash from a portion of the school’s outside wall and, as expected, a hole appeared in it as if by magic. A hole big enough for a student to squeeze in and out.

“You must have a pretty accurate night vision,” deadpanned Todoroki as he blankly stared at the hole. From what he could see from that position, there was nothing but vegetation on the other side of the wall. That would mean that Bakugou had been running through one of the forest areas during the night when he spotted that ‘backdoor entrance’. And he even had enough insight at that time to cover the hole up for possible future usage.

“I’ve lost count of how many times I’ve run through the school grounds since we’ve moved to the dorm,” said Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. He crouched down on the floor and slowly started crawling through the hole and into the school grounds. “Anyone would start noticing shit after a few dozens of times. And… see? No barrier, no alarms, no getting caught sneaking in or out, hehehe.”

“I don’t think it’s safe for you to know about any of this,” sighed

Todoroki, a small worried frown present on his features as he also crawled through the hole and stepped into the school grounds. “The dorms, the curfew and the reinforced security are there for a reason. A reason that you know and understand better than anyone.”

“Geez, you almost sounded like Aizawa-sensei just now,” snorted Bakugou, rolling his eyes around in dismissal. Once Todoroki was fully out of the hole, he partially entered it once again and started covering up their tracks with the wooden plaques and construction materials. “I don’t intend on spreading the existence of this hole through the whole school, much less outside of it. It’s just a piece of very useful information that we never know when it might come in handy. It sure as hell was useful just now. So shush up and pretend you know nothing. With the amount of bad luck we have when outside, I’m sure we’re gonna fuckin’ need to use this in the future again.”

“For as long as you don’t intend on using it during your runs, I won’t mention it to anyone,” said Todoroki, closely observing Bakugou as he crawled back into the school. And since he was paying so much attention to what he was doing, he noticed the small second where he halted completely. He sighed. “You’ve used this hole to sneak outside and inside of the school before, haven’t you?”

“It was just that one time I went for the long run, okay!?” grumbled Bakugou, sulkily stomping deeper into the forest so they could return to the dorm as soon as possible, without being spotted by anyone, preferably. “Sleep deprivation makes people do weird shit! Running lap after lap around the same area was driving me insane so I went outside for a change of scenery! Now shut up and get moving. It’s way past my sleeping deadline and tomorrow is not the ideal day for me to be sleep deprived once again.”

“Right, we have that evaluation exercise tomorrow… or better yet, today,” noted Todoroki with a small voice, slowly following after Bakugou through the forest until they reached one of the roads connecting buildings and school areas.

From that point on, it was easy to reach the dorms area, all lights out except for the street lamps.

“Hehe, sneaking in mission accomplished,” victoriously whispered Bakugou as he silently opened Heights Alliance’s front door. It seemed the dark inside of the communal area had given him a fake sense of security because what he spotted intently glancing in their direction as they came in made him loudly cuss. “Argh, shit!!”

“You’re aware that there is a dorm system, a curfew and reinforced security for a reason, right, Bakugou, Todoroki?” said Aizawa, laid down inside of his bright orange sleeping bag on the entrance floor. “Sit. Now.”

“Damn it, we were so freaking close…” grumbled Bakugou under his breath as he grudgingly stomped to the sofa and took a seat there, Todoroki closely following right behind him.

“Mind explaining what have you two been up to the whole day to only get back to the dorm at nearly 2 AM?” asked Aizawa, wiggling his way to the sofa while still inside of his sleeping bag after having turned on the lights. “Because I’ve spent the entire late evening listening to your classmates whining about you two being missing. The only reason why we, teachers, didn’t start a police search was because we could follow your location through your cell phones. Quite the long train trip you took today.”

“We were teleported by some brat’s Quirk… twice…” grumbled Bakugou, a sour expression on his face as he avoided eye contact with their teacher. “First time to Ibaraki… then to Tottori…”

“Why didn’t you contact me right away?” inquired Aizawa after a

small sigh. Why was this next generation of pro heroes so prone into getting involved in Quirk incidents, he wondered.

“Oh c’mon! It was just some brats that got startled by us while we were walking in the forest and mistook us for ogres or some shit like that, and when he noticed, we were in the middle of another fuckin’ forest in Ibaraki prefecture,” groaned Bakugou with an annoyed roll of his eyes. “We didn’t even get lost and managed to return to Tokyo just fine. Why would we need to call anyone for something like that?”

“We returned just fine but then ended up being teleported to Tottori not even an hour later,” pointed out Todoroki, which earned him a dirty glare and a barking ‘shut up’ from Bakugou.

“Even if you two were never under any danger, it might have been a different story if the ones getting teleported to random locations were regular citizens or other children,” scolded Aizawa, a small frown creasing his brows. “Being a child doesn’t excuse them from bad management of their Quirks. Actually, it’s exactly because they’re children that we, as their elders, should show them the correct way to use them, to avoid potentially dangerous situations in the future, be it towards themselves, be it towards others around them. You’re setting up a bad example by dismissing the child’s bad actions as a simple accident. You were asking to be teleported a second time when you didn’t correctly deal with the Quirk incident the first time it happened. Just be glad that it happened to you two and not to someone who would be in a lot of trouble by getting lost in an unfamiliar place.”

“Yes…” acknowledged the two of them at the same time, Todoroki with a slightly apologetical voice but Bakugou with his usual haughty grumbling.

“Not only have you two failed to report two Quirk incidents, but you’ve also caused unnecessary worry to your classmates, missed the dorm’s obligatory curfew and sneaked into the school grounds,”

reprimanded Aizawa, slowly opening the zipper of the sleeping bag to come out of it. “As a punishment, the two of you aren’t allowed to go outside the school grounds on your days off for a month and you’ll be writing an apology letter and a detailed report on both incidents, to be delivered by the end of today’s evaluation training. Also, you’re going to show me how you’ve managed to get inside of the school grounds despite the main gate being locked and the current security level.”

“Yes…” acknowledged Todoroki only this time, Bakugou being too busy clicking his tongue in annoyance.

“Now that we’re talked, go to sleep,” sighed Aizawa, folding his sleeping bag against his chest as he walked towards the dorm’s front door. “We’ll talk more about your infiltration process during decent hours of the day. Be sure to apologise to your classmates too.”

Bakugou and Todoroki followed Aizawa’s exit with their eyes, both releasing a tired sigh once the front door was closed. In the end, all of their (or Bakugou’s, at the very least) efforts had been for nothing.

“Ugh, fuck this shit… I’m gonna go to sleep…” grumbled Bakugou with a small voice, his back sideways sliding through the sofa’s backrest until his head landed on Todoroki’s shoulder.

“At least wait until we get upstairs,” said Todoroki, gently pushing Bakugou’s head out of his shoulder to get up from the sofa. Bakugou didn’t say a single thing more other than stretching his arms in his direction to urge him to pick him up. Todoroki just as gladly went along with his lover’s childish request, putting his arms around his waist to pick him up from the sofa and hold him against his chest. He couldn’t help but chuckle at feeling Bakugou wrapping both arms and legs around his neck and waist, respectively, in response. “Just like a koala.”

“Shut it,” hissed Bakugou, grudgingly biting Todoroki’s neck in retaliation. “Hurry up going to my room. I wanna sleep already.”

“If you want to sleep, don’t bite me,” advised Todoroki, a shudder crawling down his spine at the warm sensation of Bakugou’s teeth scratching against his skin. Bakugou’s mischievous temptation worked like a charm on him, to the point where just a few whispered words could get him in a whirl. Which is why he sometimes wondered how exactly Bakugou could fall asleep so easily next to him - he couldn’t get any more defenceless than while deeply asleep.

“Yeah, yeah…” dismissed Bakugou, his face flopping against Todoroki’s shoulder as he brought them to the elevator. Not that he was planning on doing much more than that, the way he was on the verge of falling asleep just by being carried to bed by Todoroki.

“Where’s your room’s key?” asked Todoroki, pressing the elevator button for the 4th floor.

“Pocket…” mumbled Bakugou as his eyes drifted close by Todoroki’s warmth and the gentle buzzing of the elevator.

“Found it,” said Todoroki after a bit of challenging clothes groping and searching. Key in between his fingers as he continued holding onto Bakugou’s nearly inert body, he exited the elevator on the 4th floor and walked up to the room chosen for that night - only to bump into another unexpected visitor down on the floor. “Kirishima?”

“Nn… Huh?” sleepily mumbled Kirishima, lightly rubbing his eyes before he lifted his head and glanced up from his sitting position against the door of Bakugou’s bedroom. When he saw his two classmates, he immediately jolted awake and stood up faster than lightning. “You’re back!! What happened to you two this time? No one saw you for the whole day and you weren’t back by curfew time and

you also didn't answer any phone calls or messages and… Bakugou, you alive there!?"

"You won't be for very long if you don't pipe down," grumbled Bakugou, sluggishly lifting his head from Todoroki's shoulder to glance over in Kirishima's direction. "Why the fuck are you snoozing away in front of someone else's bedroom? Bed, now! We've got a busy day today so get that ass to sleep!"

"Right…" acknowledged Kirishima, slowly moving out of in front of the door and towards the neighbouring one. For as threatening as Bakugou was aiming to be with those quick-fire admonishments, it was hard to feel intimidated by someone being carried around like a baby. He opened his bedroom's door with a certain hesitation as he said, "I want to hear all about it later, okay?"

"Yeah, yeah, whatever," dismissed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. He gave a small pull to Todoroki's upper clothes and urged him to move. "Todoroki, us too. Bed, now!!"

"Good night, Kirishima," said Todoroki with a small nod of his head. He unlocked the door with Bakugou's key and casually carried Bakugou inside of his bedroom. He walked up to the bed and lowered Bakugou to the mattress with a sigh. "Kirishima really worries about you…"

"Strong as I am, I have no idea why," pointed out Bakugou, quickly yanking the bedsheets out of the way before he unceremoniously dropped his body backwards on the bed. He couldn't even be bothered to change his clothes so all he did was remove the minimum amount of clothing he could and place his cell phone and wallet on the nightstand. Once Todoroki also got down to fewer layers of clothing, he pulled him into the bed, immediately curling and snuggling up against his left side. "'Night, clinging fool…"

“Says the one clinging to me,” chuckled Todoroki, leisurely pulling up the bedsheets to nestle them even more comfortably. “If you get too hot sleeping on that side, let me know.”

“‘S fine…” sighed Bakugou in the shape of a small mumble. “This side is good for sleeping too…”

“That’s good to know. Good night, Bakugou,” said Todoroki, turning his body slightly around to more easily snuggle back against Bakugou too. After a few minutes of silence, he shifted his laid down position a bit more and lovingly kissed Bakugou’s forehead before whispering, “I love you.”

“Nn… Love you too…” babbled Bakugou, sluggishly rubbing the ticklish spot on his forehead against Todoroki’s shoulder.

“…”

It was at that moment that Todoroki realised that Bakugou’s instant sleep was no longer as instantaneous as before. He’d only be able to figure out if that was a good sign or incoming doom once the beet red blush faded away from his face.

Chapter 26

"...I have the feeling I'm forgetting something…" sleepily mumbled Bakugou, his brain still slow from having just woken up. He sluggishly slid his hand over Todoroki's chest and slowly rubbed his eyes with it. It had been so long since he had last slept in a bed that he had the impression he'd been sleeping for ages, even though they had gone to bed at 2 AM. He rolled his body against Todoroki's and motioned the same hand as before to his cell phone, aiming to check the time.

First, it was only a small gasp. But when the overly large hour pointer fully sunk in, Bakugou immediately startled awake to a sitting position.

"Fuck! Todoroki, wake up!" cursed Bakugou, slapping his hand on Todoroki's stomach area a couple of times. "We overslept! We're late as hell!!"

"Nn… Yeah…" mumbled Todoroki with a deep sigh, his eyes still closed as he rolled against the mattress and snuggled up against Bakugou's lap. After releasing another slow sigh, he started drifting back to his second sleep.

"Nn… Yeah… MY ASS!!" roared Bakugou, not thinking twice before kicking Todoroki in the gut and violently pushing him out of the bed with his foot. "Hurry up and go to your room to get dressed for school! Now or I'm leaving you behind!"

"Ugh… We're already late…" pointed out Todoroki, softly massaging his now sore backside after the massive tumble out of the bed. He could fully understand why Bakugou had gotten so cranky with that previous bed fall - the bedrooms' floor was as sturdy and hard as the entirety of the reinforced building was. "Even if we run there, it won't change the fact we've missed… Ah… What time is it?"

“It’s well past 10 AM!” sourly grumbled Bakugou, quickly undressing the few outdoor clothes he had kept on when he rushed his way into bed. He lightly kicked Todoroki’s back a couple of times as he put his school uniform’s shirt on and buttoned it up. “Stop stalling there! I’ll seriously leave you behind if you’re not by the entrance door by the time I get downstairs!!”

“Yeah, yeah…” sighed Todoroki, slowly picking himself up from the floor. He placed a light peck on Bakugou’s cheek before turning around and leisurely pacing towards the bedroom’s door while yawning.

“Ah… I-I’m so leaving you behind!!” yelped Bakugou as the door was closed, his entire face exploding in a myriad of shades of red. Grinding his teeth in frustration, he rushed his dressing as much as his flustered hands could. Then again, who was he kidding? He would still end up finding some sort of excuse to stay at the dorm until Todoroki was ready to leave too.

After carefully inspecting the kitchen’s cupboards and making a mental list of anything he might need to buy to cook stuff, Bakugou finally darted out of class 1-A’s dorm with Todoroki to rush towards their main classroom. The school building and its long corridors were completely empty as they ran across them at the speed of light. Being late due to oversleeping was very different from purposely skipping classes, after all, and they hoped their teachers could take that into consideration too.

“You two sure have been the perfect partners in crime lately,” noted Aizawa, his face completely void of expression as he stared at the two panting students who had just slammed the classroom’s door open. “Hurry up and sit down so I can continue with my class.”

“Yes,” acknowledged the two of them as they stepped inside of the

classroom and motioned to their respective desks, Bakugou with a certain amount of annoyed sourness and Todoroki with the usual indifferent demeanour.

“Um… Are you okay, Kacchan?” whispered Midoriya, quickly glancing between their teacher and the classmate taking a seat in front of him. “You two were gone the whole day yesterday…”

“This is all your fault…!!” hissed Bakugou with a small voice, glaring daggers at Midoriya with so much anger and venom that the other boy quivered in his seat. “You better get ready to be killed today!”

EHHHHHHHHHHHH!? B-But I… didn’t do anything!!!!!, screeched Midoriya in the back of his mind, his body shaking in its boots throughout the rest of the morning classes.

-.-

“T-Todoroki-kun… Did I… Did I do something wrong to K-Kacchan…?” fearfully asked Midoriya, his trembling hand slowly taking his chopsticks to his mouth as he relished on possibly his last bowl of Katsudon. “I mean… I don’t remember doing anything… And you two were away the whole day yesterday but… What did I do wrong this time…!?”

“Who knows? Isn’t it just the same cranky mood of always?” pointed out Todoroki with a shrug of his shoulders, peacefully continuing to eat his lunch at the canteen with his two friends. He put a mouthful of cold soba in his mouth, chewed it and then sighed in utter disappointment - even if cooked by a renowned pro-hero-chef, it was still lacking in comparison to Bakugou’s meals. *We were so close to eating ‘dinner’ yesterday… But then the Quirk incident struck again… I wonder if I’m a harbinger of bad luck when together with other people of my age?*

“Ah… Todoroki-kun? You okay there?” asked Midoriya, his quaking momentarily halting when he heard that complex sigh exit Todoroki’s mouth. He exchanged a glance with Iida and then settled his chopsticks down over his bowl. “Did something happen when you were out with Kacchan yesterday? Well, apart from the two Quirk incidents and Aizawa-sensei’s punishments you’ve briefly mentioned already.”

“Am I sexually unattractive?” asked Todoroki with a deadpan expression, his head slightly cocked to the left as he stared away into the distance.

Orange juice was spurted all over the table in a high-speed jet the moment Todoroki’s question reached Iida’s ears. Midoriya’s face was dyed beet-red, his mouth flapping open and close like a fish out of water.

“Or is it just a matter of bad timing and external interference?” mussed Todoroki, cocking his head even further to the left as he voiced out his thoughts. “I don’t understand. Is this how it’s supposed to go when you’re dating someone?”

“Ah… Um… I… Um…” babbled Midoriya, swallowing in dry as his eyes fluttered all over the canteen except in Todoroki’s direction. “I don’t think… that’s… something you should w-worry about… The… Um… The i-infirmary… thing…”

“Bad timing and external interference, then,” concluded Todoroki, straightening his sitting stance as he tranquilly resumed eating his lunch - almost as if that conversation had never happened in the first place. “Midoriya, could you lend me the notes you took from the first few classes?”

“Y-Yeah… Su-” started Midoriya, a certain amount of awkwardness still turning his speech pattern into a small mumble. But a serious admonishing voice cut his answer short.

“Todoroki-kun, even if we know about your relationship with Bakugou-kun, you’re sharing far too much information!!” chided Iida, his hands energetically gesturing all over the place while cleaning the table from the spilt orange juice. “Think about how we feel before you share such intimate details. Think about Midoriya-kun’s life before you seek advice from him!!”

“No, well… It’s been long decided that Kacchan will be the death of me so the cause doesn’t matter much at this point… Ahahaha…” gloomily laughed Midoriya, his head and shoulders slumping down. “I just hope it doesn’t hurt too much… Ahahaha… Ahaha…”

“See!? He’s already dead inside just by thinking about it!” interjected Iida, shifting the attention of his hands to the student sitting next to him. After softly clearing his throat and adjusting his glasses, he proceeded in a business-like matter. “Every person and every relationship has its own pace. Rushing too much can turn out to be fatal. Why don’t you try to slowly increase the amount of time you spend together and see where the mood takes you?”

“We already sleep together every night, increasing our time together even more without interfering with our daily schedules might be a bit complicated,” said Todoroki, inwardly releasing a small sigh as he munched on his soba.

“You’ve been sleeping in each others’ rooms?” inquired Iida, an eyebrow slightly arched in amazement. “And yet there’s been no further development?”

“I guess,” sighed Todoroki with a quick shrug of his shoulders.

“Hmm…” softly hummed Iida, crossing his arms over his chest as he closely thought about the matter. “Impotence at such an earlier stage of life is rare but not unheard of.”

“That’s not the problem,” deadpanned Todoroki while sideways glancing at Iida. “We’re both healthy in that regard.”

“I think it’s just a matter of Kacchan being, you know, Kacchan,” added Midoriya, the gloominess around him having faded away enough for him to join the conversation once again. “His priority since we were children has always been the pursuit of a pro hero title. I don’t think he ever bothered himself with love-related matters, even when they were purposely shoved in front of him. I won’t go over the questionable reasons for that having happened since you’re the living proof that it’s possible to come to like Kacchan’s twisted personality, but whenever he was confessed to during middle school, he didn’t think twice about refusing them on the spot or ignoring them altogether.”

“Midoriya, we need to have a conversation about you and Bakugou,” said Todoroki, leaning his upper body forward so he could intensely stare at Midoriya. The air around him was already starting to flare up and warp when a familiar voice caught all of his attention.

“Todoroki,” called Bakugou, a tray with empty plates on his hands as he came to a sudden stop next to their table. Kirishima and Kaminari also stopped nearby and started chatting away with their other classmates. “I talked with Aizawa-sensei before I had lunch and he told me to pass you this message too. He arranged our evaluation exercises to be the first ones in line so we have enough time to write the reports and the stupid apology letter afterwards. He also wants us to take him to my backdoor entrance to the school grounds but that’s only for tomorrow morning before homeroom starts, to avoid any more tardiness from happening…”

“Okay, got it,” acknowledged Todoroki with a small nod of his head.

“Later then,” said Bakugou, ending his short visit just as quickly and suddenly as it started. Both Kirishima and Kaminari followed suit immediately, as the domesticated silly puppies they were whenever Bakugou was concerned, and bid their farewells to their other classmates.

“Okay, okay. So let me see if I finally got it,” started Kaminari, delivering his tray and used dishes to the cleaning staff. “You were just minding your own business while walking in the forest and then a kid shows up out of the blue and teleports you two to another forest in Ibaraki. You managed to return to Tokyo and do what you had planned on doing during your date but somehow ended up meeting the exact same kid and he teleported you two to Tottori this time?”

“Yeah,” grumbled Bakugou in acknowledgement, his eyebrow lightly twitching in annoyance at remembering all of that mess. “Congratulations on finally getting it right after needing to hear the same story five times!”

“You two have such bad luck whenever you go out somewhere together,” sighed Kirishima, placing his arm over Bakugou’s shoulders as he sympathised with his friend. “Now you’ll only be able to put that bad luck to test again after a month passes by.”

“Just be lovey-dovey with each other in the dorm for the time being~” giggled Kaminari, winking and giving a sleazy thumbs up at Bakugou. “We swear to not interfere too much if things start getting hot and steamy, hehehe~”

“Who’s gonna be lovey-dovey and shit?” scoffed Bakugou, rolling his eyes around in annoyance. The moment those words slipped out of his mouth, however, he felt a weird sensation of deja vu tickling at the

depths of his memory. As soon as they exited the school's canteen, he came to a sudden halt. "Ah…"

He had been so tired and sleepy at the time that certain memories of the previous night were hazy and unclear, but *that* had actually happened, right? *Those* words had been really professed and exchanged, hadn't they?

"AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!" screamed Bakugou out of the blue, deeply startling every student in close proximity. He hurriedly shoved Kirishima's arm out of his shoulders and darted back inside of the canteen faster than a tachyonic particle's theoretical top speed. His face went from a blush to a demonic semblance at spotting his target, one that would traumatise children rather than scare them into teleporting him to the middle of nowhere. By the time he reached the table, he could feel both his vicious body and blood-thirsty voice quaking. " *You… Come with me… Now…* "

Dead silence was Todoroki's, Midoriya's and Iida's responses. Until Midoriya bravely pushed his trembling body out of his seat and uttered a frightened squeak that resembled a 'o-o-o-okay…', at least.

"Not you, you fuckin' moron!" growled Bakugou, hurriedly walking around the table to grab Todoroki by his school's jacket.

"Do you-" was all Todoroki could say before his body was forcibly dragged out of his seat, then out of the canteen, then out of the main school building until they finally came to a stop nearby the garbage disposal area. As such, he now concluded, "-need something else?"

"Just what kind of stupid bullshit have you been babbling around while we're supposed to be sleeping, huh!?" hissed Bakugou, grabbing the collar of Todoroki's clothes to push him against the wall. The mask of an angry glare covered the entirety of his face. "Night is to

sleep, not to one-sidedly mumble sappy nonsense and shit! If you've got something to say, then say it straight to my face, you fuckin' idiot!!!"

"...?" Todoroki tilted his head with a quizzical blank expression as he stared back at Bakugou. After thinking about it for a couple of seconds, a lightbulb lightened up in his brain. "Oh. You mean when last night I said I lo- Mmgh!"

"I didn't mean to say it straight to my face *right now* !" yelped Bakugou, shoving one of his hands over Todoroki's mouth to cut him off before he repeated the same incident from the previous night. He tiredly sighed. "Fuck, this is why dealing with dense idiots is such a pain in the ass… Listen well because I'm only going to say this once! I love you to the point I'm willing to cook soba for you for the rest of my life or not give a fuck about how stupidly obtuse you are 24/7, even though that pisses me off to no end! But that's as far as it goes! Don't think you're special or hot stuff because of it! You're not! I'm still gonna kick your ass black and blue during class exercises, joint practices and on any competition that's shoved our way! I won't go easy on you just because we're dating, you got that!? Besides, you surrendered your icy-hot Quirk to me from the very start. You're not allowed to stand in a higher position than me for the rest of your fuckin' life! I'm not that much of a tyrant, though, so you'll have to conquer the place right behind me, at all times. Are we clear?"

"I don't want to," said Todoroki as soon as Bakugou let his hand slip out of his mouth. "I said you could monopolise my Quirk as much as you want but I never said I'll do whatever you want because we're dating. I'm not going to go easy on you either and I'm definitely not taking any place other than first, even if that means stealing it away from you. I might be lacking in a lot of things when compared to you but my drive to become the number one hero is on the same level as yours. Though I confess it'll be a challenge to fight you seriously when you start acting all cute like this…"

"Come again!?" hissed Bakugou, strongly kicking Todoroki's shin in retaliation. "Should I have dragged you to the hospital to go check

those shitty eyes of yours instead!? Because I swear you've been definitely skipping on your ocular maintenance for a while now, if your eyesight is this bad!"

"Now that you mention it, I guess my eyes are a bit unusual," pointed out Todoroki, recalling the heterochromatic grey and blue tonalities of his irises. "Maybe that makes my eyesight faulty by default at times."

"Wait, seriously?" gasped Bakugou, his anger subsiding considerably as he grabbed Todoroki's head and tiptoed slightly to be able to more closely observe the mismatched eyes in front of him. "Is heterochromia all it takes for some idiot to view me as cute?"

"No, I don't think that's directly connected to my eyes or eyesight," deadpanned Todoroki as he wrapped his arms around Bakugou's torso and closely hugged him, despite the awkward body position that resulted in. "I find you cute because I love you. The more I love you, the cuter and more adorable you get. So I constantly worry that if others find you and your reactions cute, then that means they've also fallen in love with you. Yes, just like with your reaction right now. Your face looks so cute right now, anyone could come to love you as much as I do if they saw it enough times."

"Shu- Be- Don't-" babbled Bakugou, his face getting so hot and flushed that he feared his brain was about to melt into a pile of goo. He desperately, urgently, imperatively, definitely needed to find a way of dealing with this side of Todoroki or his livelihood would be at risk. "D-DON'T JUST REPEAT 'LOVE' ON LOOP, YOU FUCKIN' IDIOT! DIE!"

The day he was to discover the solution for the most pressing problem in his love life would only come in the far, far away future, however.

Chapter 27

“As I told you last week, today you’ll have a small evaluation exercise based on your biggest flaws or weaknesses as heroes-in-training,” started Aizawa, closely observing his students all dressed up in their hero costumes in front of him. “Although I call it an evaluation, it won’t affect your grades in any way. It’s merely to evaluate how much you can surpass those flaws at the moment. And although I call them ‘flaws’ and ‘weaknesses’, they are actually issues that can diminish your overall performance and ranking as pro heroes rather than something villains and other evildoers can exploit and use against you. These are issues I advise you to fix but even if you don’t, it won’t prevent you from becoming pro heroes. For the most part, at least.”

“That’s why we designed several exercises and challenges for you to complete on solo or in groups, depending on the flaw you’re going to address,” added All Might, his thin frame towering above all students and teachers despite looking so frail he could be blown away by a strong gust of wind. “Of course some of you have multiple flaws that can be fixed so this is an exercise we’ll be repeating every few months. In case you can fix those issues on the first try, it’ll become just normal exercises you can pick according to your own tastes.”

“Work hard now, play hard later~!!” cheerfully said Present Mic with a shrieking voice and finger guns pointed in the students’ direction.

“Due to the nature of this evaluation, there’s going to be one exercise at a time,” proceeded Aizawa after a small annoyed sigh. “While those students are facing their flaws, the rest of us will be observing and discussing it. Learning from the mistakes of others is also a way of fixing our own. With that said, Bakugou, Todoroki, you’re both assigned to Ground Beta first. Here’s the location you need to go to.”

“Huh?” hissed Bakugou, a frown creasing his brows as he received a small paper map with a street pinpointed deep in Ground Beta. Given a portion of the conversation he shared with Todoroki during their

lunch break, having to team up with him was the one thing he wanted the least at the moment. “You telling me my current flaws is the same as his!?”

“One… Well, two of them are,” said All Might, pressing a button on his cell phone to open the large metal gate to Ground Beta. “In this exercise in particular, though, what you’ll be addressing is your destructive power. You two cause too much damage whenever you’re using your Quirks. So the objective of this first exercise is ‘not cause any damage to any building or infrastructure while fighting against villains’. But worry not, Young Bakugou, Young Todoroki, the villains are just the usual robots with a few upgrades!”

“I cause fuckin’ explosions!!!!” angrily roared Bakugou, crunching up the map in his hand. “How the hell do you expect me to not cause any damage to anything!?”

“Compared to Bakugou, I don’t think my Quirk is that destructive,” pointed out Todoroki with a calm, peaceful semblance. “Not to the point of it being called a flaw, at least.”

“The sports festival,” simply reminded Aizawa while pointing with his thumb over his shoulder towards the open gate to urge them in. “Better cut it off now before it becomes a bad habit.”

“Oh…” softly interjected Todoroki, his shoulders slumping down just the slightest at his prior behaviour. Those one-on-one fights during the sports festival were truly deserving of a Bakugou-level destruction label, especially the ones against Midoriya and Bakugou himself.

With that, Todoroki and the grumbling Bakugou departed to the assigned location while the rest of their classmates and teachers moved to the observation room, connected to the surveillance cameras placed all over Ground Beta.

“What a pain in the ass…” grumbled Bakugou under his breath as he did a last-minute check on his equipment. “Do they expect me to fight with convenience-store-bought-firecracker explosions or something…? And All Might is a fuckin’ walking catastrophe when fighting too… Shit, just those assholes wait… I’m gonna shove ‘damage-free’ up their asses real good… Hmph…”

“Do you have any plans?” inquired Todoroki, leisurely standing next to Bakugou as they waited for the buzzer that signalled the beginning of the exercise.

“…” With a serious frown on his features, Bakugou closely inspected the street they had been assigned to keep safe and sound from any damage while defeating an unknown number of modified robots. There were tall buildings on either side of the street, most of the front walls covered with large panels of windows. There were also two road lanes, with parking spaces between the vehicle-only zone and the pedestrian sidewalk, so they didn’t have overly abundant space to use for their benefit. It was the worst type of location for large explosions and ice fencing, to put it simply. Bakugou clicked his tongue in annoyance. “This is seriously a fuckin’ pain in the ass… No damage, right? Todoroki, the moment the buzzer sounds, create a wall of ice over the two sidewalks. Not too close to the buildings or the sudden temperature change might crack the damned windows… Then it’s time to kick some robotic ass!”

“Sure but your explosions can break the ice walls, which in turn can break the windows,” pointed out Todoroki, measuring the street’s length to create an approximate measurement for the ice walls in his mind. “It’s going to take more than one to keep the shockwaves under control.”

“I’ll leave that up to your capable hands, then,” snorted Bakugou, a condescending smirk slowly surfacing on his lips as the loud buzzer resounded through the entirety of Ground Beta and announced the arrival of a dozen of small-sized robots. They couldn’t have more than

3 metres of height so just a bunch of easily breakable small fries.

Like agreed, Todoroki created two tall walls of ice on either side of the street, right up until the building's rooftops. Even though the large window panels fogged up and got covered with condensation at the abrupt temperature change, the gap between the buildings and the ice wall was enough to prevent them from shattering.

As Todoroki busied himself with the main protective barrier, Bakugou charged forward towards the first line of attackers. Though they were big in number, they were slow and their large metallic joints made their movements stiff compared to a human body. Not much of a challenge, Bakugou deemed as he slammed an explosive punch on the frontal metal plate of one of the robots and forced it to topple down backwards. The robot released a black cloud of smoke from the damaged plate and ceased all movements immediately.

"Put the damage control aside and this becomes a piece of cake," snorted Bakugou, running around the fallen robot to barrel his way at the next closest enemy. That one, however, was smarter than the previous one and swung one of its robust arm-like appendages. A pillar of ice erupted from the frosty asphalt and pierced through the attacking arm, forcing Bakugou to hastily change his charge's direction with a small explosion with his right hand. He used the expanding pillar as leverage and jumped on the robot's back, blasting it away until it crashed against the ice block in front of it and became inert on the ground. He strongly stomped his foot on the robot's smoking back and glared in Todoroki's direction. "Hey, asshole! Don't butt in my fights! Get your own damned prey elsewhere!!"

"Damage prevention," deadpanned Todoroki with a shrug of his shoulders. A snake of ice ploughed over the asphalt from his right foot towards the robots directly in front of him. It caged the robots' legs in a thick layer of ice as it sped past them, immobilising their slow pace completely. He lighted his left hand on fire and threw a few fireballs at the open targets. The moment the robots caught fire and started spitting bright yellow sparks over the asphalt, the ice caging their legs expanded forward to snuff their explosion to a quiet, freezing breeze

only. Seeing the good results of this experimental attack, a certain strategy crossed his mind. “Bakugou, can you give me one of those?”

“Huh? What for?” asked back Bakugou, removing one of the grenade-shaped storing containers from his belt and throwing it at Todoroki like requested. “It’s filled with my nitro. If you want to do damage prevention, be smart on how you use that shit or you’ll end up blowing up this whole place to hell and back.”

“The heatwave taught me how to keep your nitroglycerin under control,” said Todoroki, a smirk curling up the corner of his lips as he caught the container with one hand. He crouched down on the road as he opened the small lid used to feed it with Bakugou’s nitroglycerin-charged sweat. Very, very slowly, he trickled down the liquid inside on the asphalt at the same time he froze the nitroglycerin in a slithering layer of ice that snaked its way towards the remaining robots. The grenade-shaped container couldn’t hold much liquid inside and the objective was to not cause any damages to their surroundings so he tried to thin out the nitroglycerin in the ice as much as possible as it got stuck to the legs of the approaching targets. With a completely blank expression on his face, he added, “Though I have no idea if this will actually work.”

The moment he placed the index finger of his left hand on top of the thin layer of ice on the asphalt while raising his body temperature up to flaming levels, the frozen nitroglycerin ignited immediately. Explosions echoed through the road in quick succession in a chain reaction, blowing up with the robots’ legs in the process and rendering them useless metal scraps.

However, much like Bakugou warned, the nitroglycerin’s chain reaction explosion was bigger than planned. The shockwave caused a storming gush of wind to sweep through the entire street in all directions, cracking the surface of the ice walls placed in the nearby areas.

“Overkill much?” noted Bakugou, blinking his eyes a couple of times as he took in the post-war-like scenario in front of them. Apart from the black charred marks on the asphalt and burning metal scraps, there wasn’t any other noteworthy damage to their surroundings, though. He sideways glanced at Todoroki. “Also, you’re to keep your left hand far away from me from today onwards.”

“That’s impossible,” deadpanned Todoroki with a small roll of his eyes. He got up from his crouched down position and walked over to where Bakugou was observing the robot bits and pieces burning away. “And didn’t you sleep well snuggled up against my left side last night? We even ended up oversleeping.”

“Fuck off!” grumbled Bakugou, kicking the side of Todoroki’s knee with the sole of his boot. “Is this all? Are we done with this stupid evaluation exercise?”

As soon as Bakugou voiced out that question, a rattling sound started floating in their direction. One more enemy to be defeated was approaching, one much faster and larger than the previous small robot unit. It easily had twice the height of the robots used during the entrance exam and sports festival, a humongous machine towering just a couple of metres below the building’s rooftops and Todoroki’s ice walls.

“I swear our teachers are all a bunch of fuckin’ sadists,” scoffed Bakugou, his red eyes glistening in murderous excitement as he shifted gears back to battle mode instantaneously.

“You sound pretty happy for someone complaining,” pointed out Todoroki, his breath coming out in a small frosty cloud as he also readied himself to face what he assumed to be the last boss of the evaluation exercise.

“There’s nothing sweeter than to wreck a sadist’s delusional pride and then slowly spoonfeed it to them bit by bit,” said Bakugou, slowly licking his lower lip in expectation. “I want to rub ‘damage-free’ on Aizawa-sensei’s and All Might’s faces. And in record time so let’s hurry up and get that fucker over there down!”

Todoroki didn’t even have time to roll his eyes around at Bakugou’s own sadism before the blonde darted running towards the metal beast with two explosive blasts for additional speed. It was reassuring to know Bakugou hadn’t forgotten the objective of the exercise but everyone knew the more battle-hungry he got, the less he cared about what was happening around him. He could very well end up demolishing the massive robot like a castle of cards in record time only to later notice all of the wreckage he left in his wake.

And it wasn’t as if the ‘final boss’ would be as passive and accommodating as the prior warming up robots had.

Upon Bakugou’s approach, the robot lunged its arm in his direction, with much more speed and strength than the previous ones did. If Bakugou was hit by it, getting squashed on the asphalt would be his ending. If he moved out of its path, the road would get damaged at the impact. His feet slid against the asphalt as he forced himself to a halt.

“Let’s begin with some downsizing, yeah?” declared Bakugou, pointing his right arm towards the approaching iron fist while removing the safety pin from the grenadier bracers. He hadn’t been moving around enough to work up that much of a sweat but a roaring explosion still detonated in front of him, blasting with half of the robot’s massive arm. More cracks appeared on the ice walls and small shards of ice started raining down on him. He clicked his tongue in annoyance at that. “Shit… Todoroki, the ice walls!”

“The street is too big! It’s the ice walls or taking down the robot, I can’t do both at the same time!” said Todoroki, doing some quick

reconstruction work on the section of the ice wall that suddenly started crumbling in large chunks out of the shockwave's impact.

"You're useless!!" half-heartedly groaned Bakugou in exasperation. He sideways glanced at the ice wall closest to him while keeping the robot's movements under his battle awareness at all times.

By the looks of the large cracks covering most of the walls' surface, one more large explosion and they were done for. If Todoroki could do a bit of first-aid on them and get the larger cracks somewhat closed, they might be able to use that final big blast. But it was going big or going home - if the robot wasn't taken down with it, they'd have no way of keeping those large window panels from being sent for recycling after finishing it off. Using his arm bracer had only resulted in half of the robot's arm being destroyed so he needed an explosion even larger than that. Or, at the very least, in the right spot…

"Spoonfeed them bit by bit... huh..." softly mumbled Bakugou to himself, shifting his utmost attention to the robot's structure. He truly was a genius with everything he did or said. He readily ran over to Todoroki while removing the three remaining improvised grenades from his belt. "Hey, Todoroki! Flash freeze these for me!"

"What?" interjected Todoroki, clumsily catching one of the containers when it was suddenly thrown at him. An eyebrow slightly arched in wonder, he switched his gaze between Bakugou and the grenade-lookalike.

"Do it like you did before but in tube format. And fast!" instructed Bakugou with a certain rush. "I'm gonna deliver some presents down some chimneys before a certain useless fire machine lits the fireplace on. While I'm impersonating Santa Claus, how about you get even less useless and get these walls sturdy enough to withstand one last blast?"

“Will just one more explosion get that thing down?” asked Todoroki, freezing the nitroglycerin in the requested shape nevertheless. “It’s much faster and agile than the others were, too. Can you really get these where you want them without being squashed like a fly?”

“Who do you think I am?” snorted Bakugou, a smug smirk on his features as he broke the tube-like frozen nitroglycerin into smaller pieces. After neatly securing them in his hero costume, he immediately took off with one last line, “Be sure to get those walls sturdier than your drive to pursue the number one spot or you’ll be the next thing I blow up to an early grave!!”

Bakugou ran towards the side of the robot with less half an arm and then made a beeline towards it. A few metres away from its humongous leg, he grabbed a few pieces of metal scraps and blasted them in the robot’s direction. The metallic beast whipped its good arm through the air to shoo away the projectiles but that was precisely the point. The small distraction gave Bakugou enough time to sneak up behind the robot and propel himself up in the air with his blast rush turbo.

“Tsk! You’re not stupid to the point of knocking yourself out, huh…” grumbled Bakugou as he noticed that the robot wasn’t taking any actions to remove him from on top of it. Well, if it wasn’t going to thrash around, even better for him. The quicker he’d get the small pieces of frozen nitroglycerin in the stupidly large robot’s joints. Because it really did need to be done as fast as possible or the nitro-like material would start melting and explode earlier than expected. And if he could also get some dents and holes in the robot while he was at it, nothing would make him happier.

Todoroki closely observed Bakugou moving around on top of the metallic beast from a certain distance as he fixed as much of the walls as he could. The robot probably moved and attacked through some sort of motion sensor so it was as motionless as a statue with Bakugou out of its range. For as long as he didn’t move much from his current location, it didn’t seem to want to attack Todoroki any time soon either.

Nevertheless, it was a fight against time. The outside temperature was warm enough to start melting the frozen nitroglycerin in a matter of minutes. If the robot also started moving once again and used the wrong joint, it could cause a chain reaction explosion on its own before all of the ‘presents’ had been accordingly distributed.

I should seriously consider fully mastering close combat with my Quirk too, inwardly noted Todoroki, feeling somewhat bitter and restless at the fact he was unable to help Bakugou more with the enactment of his plan.

Once the walls were ready for the worst to come, Todoroki gave a quick signal to Bakugou and faced the robot, his left side bursting out in flames.

“Let’s add you to the metal scraps down below, motherfucker!!” yelled Bakugou, propelling his body up in the air once again with two explosions.

Being tagged on the front by a torrent of flames and on the back by a midair howitzer impact at the same time, the gigantic robot exploded magnificently in multiple chain-reaction explosions. Smoke covered all of that area as the explosions’ shockwaves spread it in a circular motion. The deafening blast was followed by the creaking sound of ice shattering and falling on the asphalt. Soot and moisture covered the completely intact buildings on the other side of the crumbling ice walls.

“Hey, I told you to get those ice walls sturdy enough to take on the explosion, didn’t I!?” hissed Bakugou as soon as he reached Todoroki’s location. “Too big of a job for you to take, was it!?”

“You never said anything about you also joining in on the frozen nitroglycerin’s detonation,” deadpanned Todoroki, blankly staring at Bakugou’s pissed off expression.

“There’s no way in hell I’m letting you bag two decisive attacks in a row!” grumbled Bakugou, hmphing at Todoroki while turning his head the other way. He gave a quick sweep to his surroundings with his red eyes and asked, “Can this be considered ‘damage-free’?”

“Everything’s the same as it was when we first arrived, except for some additional cracks and charred marks on the asphalt,” noted Todoroki as he also studied the streets and the countless pieces of metal scrap burning all over the place. “I don’t think Aizawa-sensei and the other teachers will nitpick about that when the windows are all in place.”

“FUCK YEAH!” loudly roared Bakugou in celebration, for some reason falling under the temptation of high-fiving Todoroki. He could care less about teamwork and shit, but that had been one hell of an explosion, that’s for sure.

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“Wha- Wha- WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAT!?” screeched Present Mic in English, grabbing the sides of his head with his hands as he stared at the large screen with completely flabbergasted eyes. “Did that just seriously happen or am I dreaming right now!?”

“It seems that the frozen nitroglycerin incident during the heatwave served as a very useful lesson to the two of them,” noted Aizawa, his eyes a thin slit as he closely studied the results obtained from this exercise. “I never thought such a thing could have a use during battle. The way Todoroki performed damage prevention was also very ingenious, considering the location we assigned them.”

“No, no, no! You’re totally missing the point here, Aizawa-kun!” said All Might with a slightly flustered voice as he switched his shocked gaze between the large screen and his fellow teacher. “Young Bakugou openly teamed up with Young Todoroki during the evaluation exercise! Their classmates are so shocked right now, they’re not even able to speak properly!”

“K-K-K-Kacchan… T-T-T-Team… K-K-K-Kacchan has…!!!” squeaked Midoriya with a stutter, his face ghostly pale as his body shook all over the place. He was trembling so much, the notes he had been jotting down on a piece of paper had come off even messier and more unreadable than a doctor’s handwritten prescription since halfway through the battle. “I-I-It can’t…!! N-N-N-No way…!!”

“W-What the hell was that…!?” yelped Kaminari, grabbing the utterly amazed Kirishima by the shoulders and shaking him back and forward while gawking at the screen. “No, really! WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT!?!?!?!?”

“It was all, like, bam and then swoosh and then kaboom!!” excitedly screamed Ashido, her body moving around in an overdramatic way at the same time she imitated the sound effects. “At then it went totally KABAAAANG at the end!!!!”

“Bakugou… cooperated with Todoroki… without a fuss…” gasped Sero, slightly breathless from the massive mental shock the incredulous battle had caused in him. “Todoroki, dude… How the heck have you…?”

“I… I don’t want to be around if they ever have a serious argument with one another…” softly shrieked Mineta, slowly backing away from the screen. “We… will all die if they do…”

They… THEY'RE WAY TOO OVERPOWERED AS A COUPLE!!!!!!!!!!

Chapter 28

Chapter Notes

> I hate summer so damn much... I want to work and write, yes, sizzling temperatures? Can I? Please? Like, now, not after two more months of these ridiculous temperatures with no AC or electric fans around TTvTT
> (That said, I'm sorry I've been so slow with the updates... it's getting humanly impossible to move, eat and sleep around here, whether there's a week-long heatwave or just the usual high summer temperatures. Please bear with me - and the summer heat - until around mid-September...)

“Argh!!! After a fight like that, do you seriously expect me to just sit down and write a fucking apology letter like a good boy!?” roared Bakugou out of the blue, grabbing the blank sheet of paper on top of his desk and furiously ripping it to pieces. After Aizawa and the other teachers announced the extremely positive results of their evaluation exercise, they were both sent to the changing room to get cleaned from all the sweat and soot covering them from head to toes and then immediately taken to their classroom, with no opportunity to talk back about missing the remainder of the battles. “Screw this shit!! You could have at least let us write it on the fucking observation room! You’re going too far with your damned punishments, Aizawa-sensei!!!!!!”

“Bakugou, it’s no use screaming all of that when Aizawa-sensei isn’t even here,” deadpanned Todoroki, glancing up in Bakugou’s direction as he worked his way through his own apology letter. “Well, he’d just ignore you if he was here, either way.”

“Shut it!!” hissed Bakugou, turning around on his seat to throw his eraser at Todoroki - the way it hit him square on his head and then bounced off to his desk was sort of funny, though, so his anger levels went down by one-third. “Having to write a report on the Quirk incident is one thing, but having to write an apology letter because of that damned brat and his delusions on ogres or whatever shit he’s fantasising about is just ridiculous!! The brat should be the one writing an apology letter to us, not the other way around!!!!”

“I get what you mean but we also acted in the wrong way,” pointed out Todoroki with a sigh, picking up the eraser and throwing it back to Bakugou to return it. He did feel extremely bitter towards the small child and how he got in their way by teleporting them to Tottori, but Aizawa’s admonishments the previous night had been far too sound and logical for him to protest at the punishment attributed to them. There was no denying they dealt with the Quirk incidents in an inappropriate way for heroes-in-training. “And if we write them fast, maybe Aizawa-sensei and the other teachers will let us observe the last few evaluation exercises.”

“I highly doubt that…” sourly grumbled Bakugou under his breath, picking up another sheet of paper and his mechanical pen to vent his frustrations with his writing. After writing a passive-aggressive ‘I’m sorry’ in characters so big they occupied the entire page, he moved on to the report on the two Quirk incidents.

Half an hour later, Bakugou and Todoroki had concluded one-third of their punishment, the apology letters and reports both stacked on top of the teacher’s desk.

“What now? Are we supposed to just stay in here staring at the walls until the end of the afternoon classes?” grumbled Bakugou, walking up to Todoroki’s desk and taking a seat on top of it.

“Maybe one of the teachers will come to check on how the reports are coming along during a break in between the evaluation exercises,” said Todoroki with a small shrug. “I doubt they think we’ll take the entire afternoon to write the letter and reports.”

“Shit… This is all because of that fuckin’ brat! If I ever see him again, I’ll teach him a thing or two about real ogres…!” hissed Bakugou, lightly kicking the table next to Todoroki’s. A blood-thirsty smirk on his lips, he added, “I’ll show him that humans can be ten thousand

times scarier than imaginary monsters, hehe…"

"You'd end up being teleported to the other side of the globe," deadpanned Todoroki, his face completely void of expression as he stared at Bakugou's devious features.

"The brat's Quirk doesn't work like that, okay!?" hissed Bakugou, glaring daggers at Todoroki while hitting the top of his head a couple of times. "After being hit by it two times in a row, rather than straight out teleportation, I think it's fast-forwarding stuff in a straight line in the direction he pushes that thing to. Yeah, his panic and shit gave a boost to his Quirk and we ended up all the way in Tottori when he personally pushed us away, but he doesn't have enough strength to forward us to the other side of the world. And if he did, I wouldn't even end up on Earth anymore but somewhere in space. It's a straight line, remember?"

"You're only giving more reason to Aizawa-sensei and his punishment," pointed out Todoroki, crossing his arms over his chest as he reevaluated the incident. Maybe they'd actually been extremely lucky the previous day. "Did you write that down on your report?"

"Obviously," snorted Bakugou, rolling his eyes around slightly in dismissal. "I even went out of my way and wrote down the departure and arrival points, as well as the direction, total time and speed of the fast-forwarding. If Aizawa-sensei gives me even a single complaint about my reports, I swear I'm going to press charges on him to the Ministry of Education with claims of abuse of authority!"

"You're blowing things out of proportion, Bakugou," sighed Todoroki as he got up from his seat and positioned himself in front of the huffing and puffing blonde. "And deep down, you also realise that Aizawa-sensei is right on everything he said and did, right?"

“I know that!!” roared Bakugou, angrily turning his head the other day as he went on with his annoyed grumbling. “I know we should have called Aizawa-sensei right away once we were sent to Ibaraki and I know we shouldn’t have ignored the situation the way we did. I know we shouldn’t have sneaked inside of the school grounds through that hole on the wall and I know I should have reported that backdoor entrance the moment I discovered it rather than use it to go outside! I fuckin’ know all of that! So let me be pissy and feeling frustrated about all of that in peace and quiet, okay!?”

“Okay,” acknowledged Todoroki, gently ruffling Bakugou’s head. He had to quickly remove his hand from there, however, or he would risk getting it bitten off as the moody ferocious beast barked back in retaliation. Even if not in the way Todoroki was expecting him to.

“If you’re trying to comfort me, do it in a boyfriend-like way, not as if I’m a freaking brat!!” complained Bakugou, lunging his hand forward to grab Todoroki’s school jacket. A small yank was enough to erase the small distance between them and have Bakugou’s lips teasingly biting Todoroki’s. “Much better strategy, right?”

“If you want me to comfort you, you should just say so,” said Todoroki, grabbing Bakugou’s frowning features with both hands. When it came to fighting, Bakugou was the most straight forward person in the world, jumping up into action before any words were said - but whenever the fighting and battling was removed from the equation, he became an endless bundle of awkward, circling around others rather than take any action or observing from the distance with caution first whenever some sort of contact was required. That gap was so endearing and amusing to see that Todoroki couldn’t quite find the correct words to describe how being a part of it made him feel.

“I never said I wanted you to do shit…” softly grumbled Bakugou, his frowning and glaring only becoming more accentuated. “You’re doing it all on your own…”

He's never honest with how he really feels but he's still so easy to understand, inwardly chuckled Todoroki, his thumbs gently caressing the increasing 'glaring' expression in front of him. He had already seen this expression before, though. Bakugou was just pridefully trying to not let his facial muscles turn into putty. Hence the soft smile on his lips increased even further.

"Why are you looking at me like that?" suspiciously asked Bakugou, one of his eyebrows arching lightly amidst his frown. "Think twice before you blurt out any type of sappy shit because you're in the perfect position to get kicked in the balls."

"I'm not going to say anything, I was just thinking about you," deadpanned Todoroki in an attempt to keep both of Bakugou's knees far away from his crotch. For some reason, however, it seemed to have a different effect from the expected - the cheeks being held against the palms of his hands heated up so much, Todoroki wondered if he had used his fiery Quirk on Bakugou by accident. "I really can't understand how it's things like these that make you blush."

"I-It's your fuckin' face's fault!!" hissed Bakugou, slapping his hand across Todoroki's face to cover it and push it away. However, for as much grip strength he used, Todoroki refused to move both his head and his hands. "Why are you even staring at me like that!? I already told you that if you have anything you want to say, then you better say it straight to my face, haven't I!? Keep that up and I'll blow up with this stupid mug of yours!"

You just said five seconds ago you'd kick me if I said anything, inwardly sighed Todoroki, blankly staring back at Bakugou from in between his fingers. Bakugou was easy to understand even when not being honest but, in the end, he was still as hard to deal with as he had always been. *Maybe actions would be safer than words?*

With such a plan in mind, Todoroki slowly parted his lips and licked, nibbled the palm of Bakugou's hand. The sweet flavour that was

carried inside of his mouth reminded him of the sugary taste that had been left behind on his lips a distant extremely hot morning ago. Who would have thought that a substance as explosive and volatile as nitroglycerin could taste sweeter than cake, hotter than spices?

“Bakugou,” softly called Todoroki, finally removing his hands from Bakugou’s heated cheeks. He used his now free hands to also remove the barrier covering his face and aim to truly taste the sweetest part of Bakugou’s body to date. Words or actions, maybe the true plan should just be to do whatever he wanted. Todoroki knew Bakugou would do the exact same thing too. "I want to kiss you too."

"I'm not gonna kick you for something like that," snorted Bakugou, a knowing smirk on his lips as he invited Todoroki closer by circling his legs on his hips and yanking his school uniform towards him. The table underneath him shook at the crash of their bodies, but their mouths and tongues remained completely unfazed by their unsteady position as they passionately kissed. With a certain mischievous playfulness, Bakugou lightly nibbled at Todoroki's tongue, much like he had done to his hand, as their moist lips came momentarily apart. "Haa… I can't guarantee I won't bite, though."

"That won't be a problem," acknowledged Todoroki, his mouth left half open to engulf Bakugou's lips yet again as soon as possible. His hands freely rummaged through the blonde's school uniform, parting fabric from flesh to expand their contact points. He feasted on Bakugou's lips and tongue with more intensity, his fingertips relishing on how his skin seemed to ripple at the sensation of his touch.

"Ngh… Todoroki, you fuckin' idiot…" gasped Bakugou, pushing his head back to break their breathtaking kiss. He lightly wiped his prickling lips with the back of his hand, using the small intermission to get his breathing rhythm in check. "Haa… And then I'm the one with a thing for public places…"

"Don't mind me, I just came to get your apology letters and reports,"

said an apathetic voice that deeply startled the two of them. At some point throughout their makeout session, the classroom door had been open to allow entrance to Aizawa, who was nonchalantly counting the papers on top of the teacher's desk. "Since it seems you're done with this part of your punishment, you can go back to the dorm for the day. Classrooms aren't dating spots. Next time I catch you, you'll have one more apology letter to write."

"Yes…" said Bakugou and Todoroki at the same time, their bodies frozen in place as they gawked in utter shock at seeing their teacher in a place where no one was supposed to be - at the moment, at least.

"Meet me tomorrow morning at the break room an hour before homeroom so you can show me how you got inside of the school grounds after curfew time," added Aizawa as he casually walked out of the classroom and closed the door behind himself once again. Eyes placed on Todoroki's report, he softly sighed, "So that's the secret behind the sudden pro-level teamwork and all of the troublesome incidents during the last few weekends…"

There wasn't any rule that forbids romantic relationships between students so that was as far as Aizawa's thoughts on the matter went. Or rather, why would he waste his time with it when it was as clear as day that the benefits of said relationship were more positive than negative?

Chapter 29

“I knew this was going to happen…” sighed Bakugou, closing the dorm’s entrance door with more strength than usual. A furious pout could be found on his face as he took his outdoor shoes and stomped his way to the elevator. “Aizawa-sensei and his punishments are this kind of annoying logic and time-saving… I sure hope this comes back to bite him in the fucking ass one of these days.”

“What will you be doing now?” inquired Todoroki as he got inside of the elevator together with Bakugou. Since he saw him pressing the button to the 4th floor, he added, "Are you going back to your room and get your homework done?"

"I was thinking about plenty of things we could do together with the dorm completely empty but if you insist," mischievously noted Bakugou, giving a small teasing shrug with his shoulders at the same time he slid Todoroki's red necktie out of his buttoned school jacket. He strongly yanked the necktie and forced their faces to a minimal distance between them. "Wanna review some biology classes?"

"Wouldn't it be easier to simply say you want to pick up where we left off at the classroom?" deadpanned Todoroki, lightly kissing Bakugou's smirking lips. That was what he had said but the very same could be applied to him. He could have easily said the same thing instead of going the long way and inquiring Bakugou about his plans for the next couple of suddenly free hours. *Thank you very much for that, Aizawa-sensei.*

"But that wouldn't be as amusing, now would it?" laughed Bakugou, kissing Todoroki back just as gently - though his demeanour and words left behind some hints of provocation and seduction. Not that was needed much at the moment, the way they had been going so strong inside of the classroom they didn't even notice the arrival of their homeroom teacher. "I love to see that blank lost look you get on your face whenever you don't know how to react to what I say. It was

the same way in the furniture store before you burst out running out of there all fired up for some 'mealtime'."

"Is the offer still valid?" asked Todoroki, hands on Bakugou's waist as he tasted those teasing lips again and then again. Couldn't the elevator move any slower? They already had their fair share of interruptions at seemingly empty places, he didn't want to risk a second strike.

"That was a one-time deal," said Bakugou with an innocent shrug of his shoulders. "Better luck next time."

"..."

"Ahahaha! Don't give me the stink eye for something like that," laughed Bakugou, releasing Todoroki's necktie and ruffling his hair before exiting the elevator's slowly parting sliding doors. "It makes me want to tease you even more."

"Don't complain if I do the same thing to you too afterwards," grumbled Todoroki with a pout, obediently following after Bakugou to his bedroom.

"Hah! I'd like to see you try!" snorted Bakugou, rolling his eyes around just the slightest as he slipped his key out of his pocket and unlocked the door. Part of him truly did want to see what Todoroki's attempts at teasing him would be like… but another small part of him knew he'd probably end up burning his own face to a crisp if Todoroki pulled any more of those sudden attacks of his for the day. It would be safer if he didn't push his own teasing words and actions too far for the time being.

Or such was the plan until Todoroki decided to take him up on the challenge, just like Bakugou had seemingly told him to.

Todoroki pulled Bakugou to his embrace, mouth hungrily closing on his lips with a heart-stirring kiss. They stumbled their way to the bed, both hands busy stripping each other off of the clothes smothering their burning bodies. School jackets, shirts, pants, all of their clothes were left forgotten on the bedroom's floor as they reduced themselves to nakedness on the bed.

"Haa… Good thing we managed to keep our clothes on until we reached the dorm," said Bakugou with a breathless chuckle, his arms circling Todoroki's neck as he climbed on his lap. Their heaving chests glued close, they shared another deep kiss before Bakugou chuckled his amusement at the previous incident yet again. "Aizawa-sensei is man enough… haa… to get us to write an apology letter stark naked and with a raging boner further south."

"I wouldn't mind the apology letter… but I can't say the same for the rest," confessed Todoroki, his tongue lazily licking Bakugou's neck until close to his nape. He unhurriedly kissed and sucked on the supple flesh, his lover's pleasurable sighs inflating his lust to the point he left conspicuous marks behind in his flushed skin.

"Right, even if you don't mind getting it on in public places… you really hate it when there are other people around, don't you?" shortly laughed Bakugou, one of his hands sliding out of Todoroki's shoulders and slowly slipping down his upper arm, lower arm, all the way until it could squeeze in between their bodies and reach their lower halves. A hand alone, however, wasn't enough to grab their erections; that's how turned on both of them were at the moment. "Ngh… Todoroki, enough with my neck. Give me some attention a bit below too, will ya?"

Todoroki's mouth parted from Bakugou's neck with a wet kiss, licking the saliva sticking to his lips as he grabbed with both hands Bakugou's butt cheeks. When he pulled him closer while lifting himself from the mattress, Bakugou successfully fell on his back on the bed with a small yelp of surprise. The yelp changed into a small moan as Todoroki's

slippery tongue softly caressed one of his nipples, teeth joining in to tease the hardening bud later.

"You dense idiot…! Haa! That's not what I meant!" hissed Bakugou, lifting his head from the mattress to direct his furious blush straight at Todoroki. He put all of his strength on the chop hitting the top of his head but that only amounted to a small bump in the end. He was being slowly sapped out of strength as the pleasure increased, even if not in the ways he had initially sought it. "Ngh… I meant my… Ahh!"

"I know what you meant," chuckled Todoroki in between greedy suckles and nibbles to Bakugou's hardened nipple. The harder he bit, the more the body underneath him squirmed and trembled so he didn't think twice before gnawing hard on that sensitive spot.

"Ahhh!" moaned Bakugou, hands yanking at the bedsheets and back arching slightly from the bed. His face got even more flushed in embarrassment at how weird his voice had sounded as he threw all of the blame on Todoroki. "Haa… Fuck you, asshole…! If this is what you mean by teasing me back, you can pick up your shit and jerk yourself off back in your damned bedro- Mmhn!"

Todoroki didn't let him finish his bout of violent shyness, muffling his voice and calming down the raging beast with a sweet, slow but long kiss.

"I'll have to pick you up too then," whispered Todoroki against Bakugou's panting lips. A gentle smile remained present on his heated features as he nuzzled their noses together. "You're mine, right?"

"You smooth motherfucker…" snorted Bakugou, his anger fully disarmed after such a loving gesture. It didn't last long, however, as he took hold of Todoroki's cheek and strongly pinched and stretched it sideways. "You got it the other way around, though. You are mine. Get

it wrong again and I'm kicking you out."

"Isn't that basically the same thing?" pointed out Todoroki, his smile stretching a fraction more - both because of his pinched cheek and the happiness soaring in his chest. With a small kiss delivered to Bakugou's equally smiling lips, he shifted his body slightly to finally fulfil his lover's request. "Okay, no more teasing. Haa… Either way, I don't think I can hold back much longer."

"No one's asking you to," said Bakugou, feeling a small shiver climb up his spine as Todoroki pressed his rock hard cock against his own and then grabbed them both. He also added his own hands as he seductively purred, "Haa… Todoroki, hurry up and make me come…"

"Yeah," acknowledged Todoroki, butterfly kisses to Bakugou's lips as he got his hand moving and pumping their hard-ons. The gentle pecks quickly escalated to long, wet kisses, fueled by their still growing arousal and proximity. With it, Todoroki was now forced to take back some of his words. Yes, he would very much mind if Aizawa had made them write yet another apology letter and got them stuck in the classroom longer than needed, away from each others' heated embrace.

And he wanted to tease Bakugou so much more it was almost unbearable. Even if their caresses and kisses were pleasurable enough to satisfy his arousal, he wanted to touch Bakugou even more. To get even closer to him. To get even deeper inside of him, body, heart and mind.

"Bakugou, I want to put it in…" blurted out Todoroki with a husky voice the moment their lips came apart. He sat up on the bed, exchanging the hand jerking their cocks for the other one as he let his slick, wet fingers slide down Bakugou's inner thighs until they lightly probed the tight entrance. "Ngh… I want to put it in here and make love to you."

"H-Huh…?" interjected Bakugou, his brain too dazed to fully process all of the implications of what Todoroki had just declared. The pleasureful rubbing and his incoming climax also didn't make it any easier to give an answer back. "Haa…! Shit, Todoroki… I'm gonna…"

"Bakugou…!" gasped Todoroki, his body shuddering momentarily at their climaxes. His sitting position slumped down on the bed even further, completely exhausted from the intense battle a few hours ago and the current liaison. He kept the equally exhausted (and equally satisfied, he hoped) Bakugou under his gaze as they both panted the tiredness away. "Bakugou…?"

"Hm?" hummed Bakugou in acknowledgement, sluggishly sliding the back of his head against the mattress so he could glance over at Todoroki. As soon as he saw the expression on his face, he cut him off right away. "Only over my dead body will you put anything in my ass today!"

He's always so nice and heartwarming with his denials, inwardly deadpanned Todoroki with pure sarcasm, his face just as blank and expressionless as his monotone inner voice had been.

"You think you can just randomly shove something up in someone's ass and that's it?" grumbled Bakugou, pushing his elbows and lower arms on the bed so he could prop up his upper body from the messy bedsheets. "What if you completely fuck up my ass and it affects my performance in class? I want no more ass breaking going around in this or any other room, got it!? Fuck, you sprang that out on me so suddenly I'm only saying ass this, ass that left and right!!"

"Sorry…" apologised Todoroki, his head slumping down in defeat. Saying that his hopes had gotten crushed would be an understatement. And just after Iida had warned him about relationship pacing and the problems they could cause, at that. “I

rushed too much…”

“I’m not mad and I don’t think it’s something you need to apologise about either…” mumbled Bakugou, his lips curling up slightly into an embarrassed pout. “I only said ‘today’, right...? B-Besides!!! I’m not a fucking woman! Assholes weren’t made to have things being pushed in, only out! There’s no way two completely clueless virgins would be able to do it right without some careful research and preparation first! You have another thing coming if you think I’m willing to get stitches in the last place someone wants to have stitches in!”

“Bakugou… I love you so much,” sighed Todoroki, throwing his body forward with his arms wide open. He squashed Bakugou’s body underneath his as he tightly hugged him, their white, stinky releases getting sandwiched in between their stomachs and chests.

“Gah!! Fuck off!” yelped Bakugou, barely unable to move or breath underneath the solid weight of all of Todoroki’s body. He hurriedly tapped on Todoroki’s upper arm to urge him to move. “This is fucking disgusting! Get away from me! You can hug me and squash me all you want after we get this gross stuff cleaned!!”

“Should we take another bath then?” suggested Todoroki, rolling his body slightly around so he could give Bakugou enough room to breathe and not end up being blown up out of the bed. “We have the communal bath all to ourselves.”

“Don’t start getting funny ideas in your head, you damn perv,” snorted Bakugou, lightly pinching and stretching Todoroki’s cheeks. “No more making out in public places for the time being.”

“Dad depheds moo on yoo dan me,” deadpanned Todoroki with a deformed and mumbly voice.

“Stop making it sound as if I’m making bedroom eyes at you 24/7!!” hissed Bakugou, releasing Todoroki’s cheeks so he could slap the back of his head. He clicked his tongue in annoyance while slowly turning his face away from him. “Seriously… Making people seem like fuckin’ perverts when you’re the one jumping into my pants every opportunity you get…”

“You were hard when we were kissing in the classroom,” deadpanned Todoroki once again, a totally disbelieving blank gaze on his eyes as he stared straight at Bakugou’s escape attempt.

“Ugh… It’s not my fault your turned on face turns me on, okay!?” roared Bakugou, fully turning his head sideways.

He was pretty sure Todoroki could still see him blushing redder than a tomato or a stop sign so that’s how he ended up accidentally judo throwing his boyfriend out of the bed and deep cleaning his room’s floor from any bits and dribbles of fluids from the male reproductive system after a long soak in the communal bath.

Chapter 30

“You make that dish a lot for dinner,” noted Todoroki, his mismatched eyes stuck on the student sitting down at the dining table opposite to him. He lifted his chopsticks and blankly slurped his cold soba noodles cooked to perfection. “Do you like it that much?”

“I wouldn’t cook it if I didn’t like it,” pointed out Bakugou, stuffing a bit more of his spicy stir-fry in his mouth. He chewed his dinner with a certain disinterest, but when Todoroki’s blank stare persisted on his food, he was forced to arch an eyebrow slightly. “What?”

“I want to try it,” said Todoroki, placing his chopsticks down on his plate while leaning his upper body over his meal. He then parted his lips and kept his mouth open while waiting.

“…” Bakugou stared back at Todoroki in utter silence for a couple of seconds, expecting him to withdraw all on his own. When he noticed that Todoroki had no such plans and would probably spend the rest of their dinner time with his mouth wide open, he softly sighed. He got up from his seat and went to fetch a glass from the kitchen’s cupboard, quickly filling it nearly all the way up with water before returning to the dining table. Once he sat down on his seat again, he picked up his chopsticks and shoved a piece of his spicy stir-fry in Todoroki’s mouth. His lips curled up into a mischievous smirk as he did so. “I’ve always wondered what your crying face looks like.”

“UGH!!” Todoroki slapped his hands over his mouth before Bakugou even finished his sentence. His features became bright red and sweat started to dribble down his temples as an intense spicy wave exploded inside of his mouth. He couldn’t even properly chew the stir-fry, only hurriedly swallow what was in there to free himself from the burning sensation as quickly as possible.

“AHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!!” burst out laughing Bakugou, sliding the glass of water across the table in Todoroki’s direction. The way he immediately grabbed the glass and greedily gulped it down only made Bakugou laugh even harder. “If I had known it would be like this, I’d have given you a spicy variant of soba noodles rather than the green tea ones! Ahahahahahahahaha!”

“How… Cough! How can you… eat that nearly every night…?” gasped Todoroki, huffing a couple of times to try to fill his burning mouth with cold air.

“Oh c’mon, it’s not *that* spicy,” said Bakugou, rolling his eyes around just the slightest with amusement. He got up from his seat once again and went to refill Todoroki’s glass with water a second time. Not that binge-drinking water would make much difference when it came to the damages his meal probably already did to Todoroki’s tongue. “I didn’t even use peppers, just regular, store-bought spices.”

“Your taste buds must be broken…” mumbled Todoroki, sticking his throbbing tongue out afterwards.

“My taste buds are fuckin’ amazing, you must mean,” scoffed Bakugou, placing the glass of water on the table in front of Todoroki. He grabbed the tip of his stuck-out tongue and gave it a quick inspection. Bakugou gently ruffled his red and white locks and walked back to his seat, mischievously licking the saliva sticking to his fingertips. “Your tongue will be back to normal in a couple of hours. But if it burns that bad, you big baby, go drink some milk or eat half of the rice in the rice cooker.”

“Won’t soba make it better too then?” inquired Todoroki, inwardly cringing as he observed Bakugou leisurely stuff a bit more of the demonic stir-fry in his mouth as if a piece of sweet, sweet candy.

“It doesn’t have enough starch in it for that,” said Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders after he chewed the food in his mouth. “Milk or yoghurt is your best bet, second only to not try to gobble up my dinner.”

“Never again will I do that…” mumbled Todoroki under his breath as he got up from the dining table and went to grab himself a glass of milk from the fridge, still huffing and puffing to cool down his tingling and throbbing tongue.

“You know…” sighed Kaminari, leisurely eating his dinner too while observing the spectacle that had just occurred next to him. “I know I told you we wouldn’t bother you guys while you’re being all lovey-dovey in the dorm. But I wasn’t expecting such a… a… old married couple type of lovey-dovey.”

“It suits them better than the usual teenage couple lovey-dovey shenanigans, though,” added Sero as he chewed on his food. Once he swallowed, he continued. “I’d be creeped out of my mind if Bakugou had gone ‘say ahh~’ or ‘open wide~’ on Todoroki just now… Or started gently blowing on his tongue while lovingly patting his back… Ugh, just imagining it is sending the shivers down my spine.”

“You guys are fuckin’ disgusting,” groaned Bakugou, his face the one getting a creeped out expression as he sideways glanced at his classmates. “Get away from me. I don't want to be associated with your stupidity.”

“The nicer you become to your boyfriend, the meaner you are to your friends…” sighed Kaminari in an overdramatic way, his arms raised high in the air to beckon for some solidarity on his being. “The end of the world must be approaching us faster than lightning…!”

“What do I gain from being nice to you idiots?” scoffed Bakugou with

a roll of his eyes. “I receive no money from it nor do I become happier over it in any way or shape. Why waste my time with it, right?”

“What do you gain from being nice to Todoroki, then?” countered Sero, his facial expression becoming slightly more serious all of a sudden. Putting his budding doubts on why exactly was he friends with such a douchebag aside, he wanted to know the secret behind the miraculous results his two classmates had had during their evaluation exercise.

“You’ll know once you stop being single,” said Bakugou, leisurely resuming with his dinner as he observed Todoroki return to the seat opposite to his. He asked, “Better?”

“Yeah, a bit,” acknowledged Todoroki with a small nod of his head. With his face as deadpan and void of expression as a blank sheet of paper, he added, “Don’t ever trick me into eating spicy flavoured cold soba, Bakugou. It might kill someone.”

“Damn it, that was the next one on the list…” grumbled Bakugou with an annoyed click of his tongue. He sighed in disappointment before completely scratching off the idea from his inner to-do list. “Well, I’ll just keep them around either way. If anyone tries to take a bite from your soba noodles while I’m not looking, they’ll be playing Russian roulette with their taste buds, hehehe…”

M-Maybe he’s not that nice to Todoroki either…, inwardly mumbled Sero and Kaminari at the same time, both swallowing in dry in fear. Unbeknown to them, all thoughts on sneaking to the fridge in the middle of the night to taste a little bit of the heavenly soba noodles had evaporated from their brains.

“Hey, guys!” hurriedly greeted Kirishima, bursting his way inside of the communal area through the front door. Halfway to the elevator

already, he spotted the exact same person he was about to go visit at the dining table. “Bakugou, there you are!! Can you come help me with something real quick? It won’t take more than 10 minutes or so, I promise!”

“What now?” asked Bakugou, an eyebrow slightly arched as he suspiciously observed Kirishima running all the way up to the dining table.

“After today’s evaluation exercises, I feel like I’m super close to perfect this move I’ve been thinking about for a while now but I need some help with the actual deed,” explained Kirishima, his legs continuously dashing on the same spot as he urged Bakugou to follow him outside. “Oh, I already asked Aizawa-sensei for permission so you can be as loud and aggressive with your explosions as you want, for as long as you don’t destroy any building or school property. Within the next 30 minutes, at least. That’s how much I could wring out of Aizawa-sensei after begging at him for nearly 2 hours straight…”

“You guys are such a pain in my ass…” sighed Bakugou, reluctantly getting up from his seat for the nth time since he started his dinner. He stuffed his hands on his pants’ pockets and followed right next to the extremely excited Kirishima. “The front yard’s good enough for that, right? Because I’m not walking any further than that.”

“Thank you!! You’re the best, Bakugou!!” cheerfully said Kirishima, a grin on his lips as he put his arm over Bakugou’s shoulders on their way out of the dorm.

Kirishima’s at it again…, inwardly grumbled Todoroki, his body slightly turned around on his seat so he could accompany Bakugou’s and Kirishima’s exit with his sulking gaze. *And, as usual, Bakugou’s completely oblivious about it. No matter how many times I tell him about it, he still lacks self-awareness on the things he does. Maybe it would be faster to aim directly at those around him rather than the source of it...*

“Hey, Todo- WOAH! Do you need me to get the fire extinguisher or something!?” yelped Kaminari, both him and Sero immediately jumping out of the dining table when Todoroki’s left side suddenly burst out in flames.

“Huh? Oh. Sorry,” apologised Todoroki, putting the flames out as soon as he noticed them charring the wooden table. He sat back straight on his seat and, while resuming with his cold soba noodles, stared quizzically at his two classmates. “You were saying, Kaminari?”

“R-Right… What was that thing between you two earlier this afternoon?” asked Kaminari, cautiously sitting back on the dining table, hopefully to finish his dinner without the fire alarms going off on them. “Bakugou has gone along with others’ plans during previous school exercises and actual fights because it also suited his objectives or favoured him in some sort of way but he never fought alongside anybody the way he did during your evaluation exercise.”

“Yeah, your fight against those robots was amazing,” acknowledged Sero with a couple of nods of his head. “Even All Might was surprised at how good your teamwork was. He previously fought against Bakugou and Midoriya, remember? But he said your teamwork had been on a completely different level compared to that momentary cooperation between him and Midoriya. What’s the secret to it?”

“Secret?” repeated Todoroki, halting his slurping and lowering his chopsticks to his plate as he wondered what exactly was Sero talking about. All he and Bakugou had done during the evaluation exercise was to follow Bakugou’s damage control plan to a T while adding a few experimental explosive twists by combining their Quirks on a few instances. Was that perhaps something others considered to be a secret technique?

“You know, the secret to team up with someone on such a god-level,”

explained Kaminari, getting all hyped up with expectation over Todoroki's answer. "We know that Quirk compatibility and a good relationship with the other person are key factors for good teamwork. But there must have been something else with you two, right? I mean, it's Bakugou we're talking about here! Just those two factors wouldn't be enough reason for the sudden ascension to the god-tier partnership."

"Oh," interjected Todoroki, finally understanding what Sero had meant. He briefly thought about the question and his answer to it. Head slightly cocked to the right, he said, "Love, maybe."

"Love?" repeated Kaminari and Sero at the same time. A loud, roaring explosion resounded from the dorm's front yard, accompanied by Kirishima's screeching yelp, but Todoroki's answer was still more shocking than whatever torture technique Bakugou was inflicting on their classmate.

We'll just ask Bakugou when he comes back…, inwardly sighed Sero and Kaminari. It always ended up the same way - whenever they asked Todoroki something about Bakugou or their relationship, they ended up needing to resort to Bakugou too to translate whatever cryptic message Todoroki was trying to convey to them.

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"Hey! You still alive, Kirishima?" called Bakugou, pushing a few bushes and tree branches away as he searched around for Kirishima's landing location after being blown away to hell and back.

"Yup… I'm a-okay…" groaned Kirishima, lifting his hand with a thumbs up while his body remained doubled over a large bush. Aside from ripped clothes and bits of leaves and vegetation all over his body, he didn't have a single scratch or wound on him. "I'd like to call

it a success but I was totally blown up by you just now, wasn't I? It seems I still have a long way to go before I can withstand one of your large explosions without being sent flying to the end of the world…"

"The fact you don't have any pieces missing is already a big success on its own," pointed out Bakugou, offering a hand to help Kirishima getting up from the bush. "Don't push your luck too much or you'll end up six feet underground."

"That's true," acknowledged Kirishima, happily taking up Bakugou's offer and clasping his hand as he got back up. He quickly dusted his ripped clothes with his hands, removing any leaves and sticks stuck to him. "Thanks a lot, Bakugou. If I didn't do this now, I have the feeling I'd wake up tomorrow to not remember today's moment of clarity."

"Sure, whatever," dismissed Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. "Next time try to not interrupt me as I'm about to finish my dinner, though."

"Sorry, sorry," apologised Kirishima with a huge, not very apologetical, grin tugging at the corner of his lips. He slapped his hand on Bakugou's shoulder and gave it a couple of pats. "Why don't I treat you to something the next time you drag me on your grocery shopping adventu- WOAH!!"

"What the fuck are you doing…!?" hissed Bakugou, his body startling just the slightest at Kirishima's sudden scream and the even more sudden yank he gave at the back of his shirt's collar.

"Ah! No, it's just…" babbled Kirishima, nervously shaking his head around as he tried to come up with a good explanation - or better yet, an explanation that didn't get him blown up a second time in a row. "Um… On the... back of your neck… Ah… There's a few… Actually, quite a lot of… Um..."

“Huh?” said Bakugou, an eyebrow arched on his brows as he took his hand to the nape of his neck. His cheekbones broke into a bright red colouring as his brain went into rewind time yet again. “That damned horny bastard! I knew he was weirdly focused on my neck today!! I am so gonna fuckin’ kill him!!”

With that, Bakugou began a furious dash back inside of the dorm, with Kirishima barely keeping up with his sudden demonic awakening.

“HEY, TODOROKI!!” roared Bakugou after having kicked the front door open. He angrily stomped his way to the dining table but the pet idiot of class 1-A seemed completely oblivious about his bad mood as he began talking just as Bakugou was about to hurl his admonishments at Todoroki.

“Bakugou, give us your side of the story now~” cheerfully said Kaminari, wolfing down the last bites of his dinner before he went on and on. “What’s the secret behind your sudden god-level teamwork with Todoroki?”

“Huh!?” furiously hissed Bakugou as he put his arm around Todoroki’s neck and yanked him out of his seat with a light chokehold. “What teamwork!? I just put what’s mine to good use! Now fuck off! Kirishima, get our dishes done as payment for the overtime training.”

“S-Sure…” sighed Kirishima, inwardly sending his apologies and prayers to Todoroki as he was dragged inside of the elevator.

“How the heck do those two even communicate with one another?” asked Kaminari to no one in particular as soon as the sudden storm went away. “One makes no sense, the other makes even less sense… Damn, I don’t even understand if they get along or not!”

“Ignorance is bliss, Kaminari, ignorance truly is bliss…” said Kirishima, doing as told and taking the dirty dishes and tableware on the dining table to the dishwasher. He softly mumbled to himself, “Maybe I should buy some good headphones this weekend…”

Chapter 31

Chapter Notes

> I clearly took quite a lot of liberties with this chapter but please bear with me. It will be worth it :3

“You sneaked inside of the school grounds through a hole in the outside security wall,” noted Aizawa with a nonplussed expression, his eyes slowly measuring the size and shape of the mentioned hole in front of them. He slowly switched his gaze to his two students, stony black eyes narrowing even further. “Despite all the bad luck you encountered through the day, you sure were lucky to find such a convenient backdoor to the school grounds when you needed it the most.”

Neither Bakugou nor Todoroki provided much reaction to his comment, probably as a result of both the early hour in the morning and their sulkiness at the punishment they were attributed. Aizawa, however, knew his students better than that already.

“Which one of you knew about the hole already and for how long have you known about it?” inquired Aizawa as he crossed his arms over his chest. Between the two culprits, Bakugou was the one most likely to withhold information and coerce others to keep said information a secret from everyone else. But whether Todoroki already knew about the hole beforehand or only found out about it the previous Sunday, Aizawa doubted he’d throw all of the blame on Bakugou or even admit to his withholding ploy. Without a confession, it was hard to dub them as guilty as he already knew them to be. As the tense silence stretched more and more, he sighed. “I’ll be calling Cementoss so if there’s any other hole you’re aware of, now it’s the right time to redeem yourselves and tell me about it. Not after you’re done using it to sneak in and out of the school grounds throughout your month-long ban from leaving school grounds.”

“I thought it was just during our days off?” pointed out Todoroki, taking a small glance at the dead silent Bakugou. If the thing he was

thinking about was about to happen, everyone would have to walk on eggshells around a certain explosive blonde for a full month. Todoroki included.

"It was just during your days off. But there's a hole in our supposedly impregnable security system and two students knowingly using it to break the school rules," explained Aizawa as he took his cell phone from his pocket and started walking out of the forest area for better signal. "Maybe we'll find more weak spots in the security system if you two are left under full school arrest for a while. You'll be quite busy in these upcoming weeks so it's not like it'll make much difference whether you can leave the school grounds or not."

"Aizawa-sensei," called Bakugou all of a sudden. It was perfectly visible to both Todoroki and Aizawa that that had been the last drop and he was about to completely snap on their teacher's face. However, contrary to their expectations, there were no roaring yells, no missile-level explosions. It was just words and a massive amount of self-restraint that could have him burst a vein at any moment. "I am so very sorry that this school's security system is so shitty, the teachers don't know there's a big fuckin' gaping hole in the wall and a student had to be the one covering up their mess, keeping it from being seen from outside and making sure no one realised it could be used to go in and out during the hours when the barrier is not operating at 100%. The next time I find a small hole in the wall, I'll blow up with the whole thing until it's big enough for the entire world to see, yeah?"

"Or you could just report it to the teachers right away," deadpanned Todoroki despite himself. He managed to block the swinging punch Bakugou threw at him but that did little to nothing to keep the verbal assault away.

"Todoroki, shut up and learn to read the mood or I'm gonna fuckin' turn you into a glorified wall-buried mummy for future, dumber generations to find when they decide to turn this damned school into rubble!" hissed Bakugou, slapping Todoroki's hand away from his fist. He turned his attention back to their teacher but Aizawa was already nowhere to be seen. "Argh!! I hate our damned teachers so fucking

much!!”

“Calm down, Bakugou, it’s just for a month,” said Todoroki, slowly closing in on the huffing and puffing ferocious beast to try to calm him down before his frustration and irritation reached explosive levels. “We don’t go outside during school days all that much and we can enjoy some indoor dates for a while rather than test our luck outside during our days off.”

“Are you fucking retarded or something!? Not being able to leave the school grounds means no grocery shopping for a full month, you know!?” growled Bakugou, readily turning his head the other way as he began stomping out of the forest and into the main school building. “No grocery shopping means no more home-cooked meals for any of us! Say goodbye to your favourite soba the moment I run out of buckwheat flour!! Oh, and while we’re at it, you might as well say goodbye to having sex with me any time soon because WE CAN’T FUCKING BUY ANYTHING!!”

It would be an understatement to say that Todoroki got his heart broken that morning.

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“Good morning to those I haven’t seen already～!” cheerfully greeted Kaminari, waving one of his hands high in the air as he, Kirishima and Sero stepped inside of the classroom. His eyes went wide in happiness at spotting the groupie member that had been missing from his usual breakfast seat in the dorm’s communal area. “Hey, Bakugou! You sure left the dorm early thi- MMHN!?”

“ ***Huh…?*** ” growled Bakugou, slowly turning his bloodshot eyes in the door’s direction. Black miasma could almost be seen exiting his pores as he furiously glared a hole through the newcomers to the classroom.

“It’s nothing,” stepped in Iida, one of his hands covering Kaminari’s mouth as slaughter prevention. He closed the door behind himself and called his three classmates further away from the murderous blonde’s range. “Now’s not a good time to talk to Bakugou-kun. If you do, you might end up like Midoriya-kun.”

“Why is he in such a dark, pissy mood so early in the morning?” asked Kirishima, inwardly wincing at seeing Midoriya nearly weeping while being comforted by Uraraka, Asui and Todoroki in one of the corners of the classroom. What exactly had happened in their classroom before they arrived?

“Long story short, Aizawa-sensei extended Bakugou and Todoroki’s prohibition to leave the school grounds from days off to a whole month,” explained Iida, quickly recapitulating what Todoroki had explained to them short moments before Midoriya accidentally said the wrong thing and was swiftly murdered by Bakugou’s words. “They can’t go outside the school grounds until the end of October.”

“Why the sudden punishment extension?” inquired Sero, cautiously keeping the moody blonde under his gaze. “What kind of mess did they get involved in this time when the first bell hasn’t even rung yet?”

“I’m not sure but the way Bakugou-kun’s acting, I’d say it was something he did and Todoroki-kun accidentally got caught on the crossfire,” said Iida as he adjusted his glasses on the bridge of his nose. “Todoroki-kun’s the same as usual so that only makes me suspect Bakugou-kun even more.”

They switched their gaze from Bakugou to Todoroki, who was returning to his desk now that Midoriya had calmed down. He leisurely sat down on his seat, took a deep, slow breath and… his face came crashing against his desk’s surface in utter dismay.

“You call that the same as usual!?” whispered Kaminari in a total panic, aggressively pointing his index finger at Todoroki’s grievous sitting position. “I’ve seen more life in a horror movie’s corpse than on Todoroki just now!!!”

“Well… I guess…” noted Iida after softly clearing his throat. Amidst all of the confusing unknowns and abnormal moods, the first bell rang and Iida, as the class representative, started instructing everyone to go their seats - he felt somewhat apologetical towards Midoriya and those near Bakugou but the assigned seats were the assigned seats and there was little any of them could do about them.

As punctual as usual, Aizawa opened the classroom’s door a few seconds after the school bell stopped ringing.

Fuckin’ sadist, coming to his homeroom class like the world’s the best thing ever, inwardly fumed Bakugou as he glared daggers at his teacher. Under normal circumstances, he’d just be momentarily pissed at Aizawa for extending the punishment and then just ignore it completely until what he had to do was fully done. But this time, he honestly felt that Aizawa had accidentally pushed it a bit too far for him to stomach it. *I don’t think with my dick like Grape Trash does and I sure as hell ain’t a horny bastard like Mister Denseness over there, but screw you, Aizawa-sensei! You can erase our Quirks for all I care but you have another thing coming if you think you can do our plans in like that! I’ll get that grocery shopping done even if I have to demolish the entire wall like fuckin’ dominoes! You just wait! I’m gonna steal Todoroki’s virginity before you have enough time to extend our punishment a second time!!!!*

I want to go home…, inwardly sobbed Hagakure, Jirou and Midoriya, trying to put as much physical distance between themselves and the demonic overlord grinding his teeth into oblivion as they could while sitting down in their desks.

“All of the evaluation exercises were completed yesterday so we can move on to the next phase,” started Aizawa, completely ignoring the dirty looks two of his students were throwing at him. The two top students from his class sure had gotten in total sync as of late. “After much deliberation and even more teacher reunions and meetings with the ministers and other key figures, Principal Nezu was able to approve this year’s school festival.”

“Eh…?” gasped the majority of the students.

“The school festival is going to happen next month and the preparations for each class’s events are to begin this week,” proceeded Aizawa as usual, magically popping out his yellowish sleeping bag from underneath the teacher’s desk. “Unlike previous years, it’ll be a school event closed to the general public and the mass media. But since things regarding the League of Villains and major villain attacks to U.A. have been so calm as of late and since we also need to take into consideration the general and development departments, Principal Nezu was able to convince those in higher positions to allow hero agencies and trusty associated companies to have access to the school festival. Each student will also receive two invitations that they can give to whoever they want, but they need to register those two guests up to one week before the event or they won’t be allowed to enter the school grounds. With that said, you can spend the rest of today’s homeroom trying to figure out what your class will be doing.”

“Ah, Aizawa-sensei!” called Iida, raising his hand in the air to be allowed permission to speak. But he had acted too late - their homeroom teacher was already fast asleep inside of his sleeping bag on the raised blackboard platform.

“This was so sudden, I don’t even know what to say…” confessed Yaoyorozu, blinking her eyes a couple of times as she stared at their teacher in surprised amazement.

“I mean, Aizawa-sensei said the usual school festival was green-

lighted, despite some restrictions, so…" mumbled Ashido, her arms crossed over her chest as she tilted her head slightly to the left.

"HELL YEAH, IT'S TIME FOR THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL!!!" loudly cheered a large portion of class 1-A, with fists being pumped in the air and students jumping up and down in their seats.

"Let's start deciding what our class will do, then," acknowledged Iida, both he and Yaoyorozu getting up from their seats and walking up to the front of the classroom to keep the discussion as organised as possible. "Are there any suggestions already?"

"The most common thing would be a food stand of some sort, right?" said Jirou. "Like takoyaki or crepes or something along those lines."

"Ohh! Satou-kun's cakes and sweets are great so we'd definitely be able to pull off a crepes stand!" energetically noted Uraraka with a couple of nods of her head.

"But a food stand is a bit…" grumbled Satou, a light blush on his cheeks at the sudden compliment as he scratched the back of his head. "I mean, when it comes to us students and other school staff, we're far too used to the food served by chef pro-hero Lunch Rush. The visitors and other guests might not notice the difference in quality but my pride would… There's no way we can rival with that many years of cooking experience."

"That's true…" acknowledged the students in unison, some of them releasing a disappointed sigh afterwards.

"Wait! But we do have someone who'd be able to rival Lunch Rush's cooking experience!" said Kirishima out of the blue, his whole body startling to a straight sitting position.

Bakugou…, inwardly mumbled the majority of class 1-A, their hungry gazes all focused on a certain moody blonde, smirking mouths overflowing with voracious drool.

"How about… a hot and cold soba stand?" suggested Kaminari, unconsciously licking his lips in expectation.

"My/Bakugou's soba is for Todoroki's/my meals only," cut off Bakugou and Todoroki in perfect synch. Even in the off-chance of them running out of their own ingredients, mainly the buckwheat flour, none of the two was willing to surrender the exclusivity behind that dish to the general public. The school festival wasn't worth that much.

"Oh c'mon! You two are such party poopers!!" complained Hagakure, frenetically gesturing her invisible hands around in the air. "Sharing is caring, right?"

"I don't care about any of you, much less about a random extra," said Bakugou, a dead serious expression on his face as he shrugged his shoulders and piped down once again.

You sure are loved, Todoroki, but ouch, that hurts…, cringed their classmates in the back of their heads, Kirishima going as far as to clutch the front of his school uniform in a physical display of hurt. They weren't ready to throw in the towel just yet, though. *We want to eat Bakugou's food and no one can stop us now! Not even the top two themselves!*

"Then, how about Japanese food!?" suggested Uraraka, quickly wiping the droplet of drool that was about to slip out of her mouth with the back of her hand as she raised it high in the air.

“Y-Yes, I agree with that one!” also acknowledged Midoriya, raising his hand in the air likewise. *Kacchan’s katsudon… Kacchan’s katsudon…!!*

“Japanese food would be too hard to do in a high school-level food stand. Let’s do a barbecue!” offered Kirishima, crashing his hardened fists against each other. “Who doesn’t love a good, old explosive barbecue? I sure do! Let’s bring ‘em the meat, guys!”

“Nah, that’s far too random! How about hamburgers!?” suggested Kaminari once again. “We’d just need the buns, the patties, the extra ingredients and sauces, and Bakugou’s godly hands!”

“Buns… huh…” mumbled Mineta, his fingers entwined in front of his face as he closely listened to the back and forth discussion between his classmates. “If it’s buns you want, we should do a maid café!!”

“A butler café!!” cut off Ashido, slapping her hands on her desk as she got up from her seat. “We could totally do a butler café!”

“No, no, no. A *maid* ca-” corrected Mineta but he couldn’t finish his sentence. Asui’s frog-like tongue and words slapped him into silence.

“There are more boys than girls in our class so a butler café would make more sense than a maid one,” pointed out Asui after withdrawing her tongue back inside her mouth. “None of us will fall for your perverted ploys during school events a second time, Mineta-chan.”

“If you want to dress up but still work with food, why don’t we do an interactive themed or story-based café booth?” unconsciously blurted

out Todoroki despite himself.

“That’s… actually a really good idea!!!” exclaimed Ashido, clapping her hands once, eyes shining in enthusiasm. “Like, it’s a really, really cool concept! And totally acceptable for a school festival setting, I’d say!”

“It came from a totally unexpected person, though,” pointed out Tokoyami, his head slightly cocked as he peeked over his shoulder at the student sitting behind him. “How did you come up with such a conciliatory idea?”

“I noticed a few ads related to stores like that when yesterday night Bakugou and I were watching p-” explained Todoroki with a deadpan expression but, much like it had happened earlier with Mineta, he was silenced when a textbook was catapulted straight to his face.

“You say one more word about that and you will talk no more,” warned Bakugou, sitting the other way around on his chair so he could violently shut Todoroki up before he blurted out more than he should. Never again would he do any research with his dense, idiot of a boyfriend around…

Who cares how that idea came into being, we finally have an excuse to make Bakugou cook for us all!, unanimously declared class 1-A in the back of their heads, their famished evil gazes once again focused on one of their classmates only.

“I’m not cooking for you idiots,” declared Bakugou right away, easily being able to read what was going through his classmates’ brains with the way they were looking at him alone. “And I’m definitely not going to waste my time cooking for a stupid school event either. What do you even think I am, a cook for hire or some shit like that?”

“We’ll pay for all the ingredients used for taste testing purposes and the actual school festival!” said Uraraka in an attempt to convince Bakugou. If desperate times required the biggest penny-pincher in the entire class to suggest cutting off one single student from all expenses during the school festival, then those were *really* desperate times.

“I. Don’t. Care,” refused Bakugou, turning his body on his seat and placing his elbow on top of his desk before leaning the side of his face on the palm of his hand. He couldn’t seem any less uninterested in the school festival’s discussion than that.

“Plus I’ll go buy all the groceries you need for your and Todoroki’s dinner while you two are banned from leaving the school grounds!!” added Kirishima, jumping out of his seat as fast as lightning. “I went grocery shopping with you enough times to know by heart which stores you usually go to or what brands you buy!”

“…”

“Oh! We can also get all of the cleaning done on the dorm during the menu’s taste testing runs!!” volunteered Ashido with fervour, Kaminari, Sero and Midoriya nodding their heads in tandem. “You won’t have to worry at all about getting all of the cooking utensils washed!”

“…”

“We can also take care of any props and clothing needed for the themed area of the café booth,” announced Yaoyorozu, which gained her a couple of thumbs up from other classmates. “I think I could come up with character designs and individual personas for those who will be in the café serving the customers. The stories and character

lines too."

"You can leave the sound system to me," declared Jirou with a confident nod of her head.

"...For as long as there's no soba in the menu…" mumbled Bakugou, his low voice loud enough to be heard by his classmates.

"YEEEEEEEEEEEES!!!" celebrated the students, their voices and cheers even louder than when they had previously lauded the school festival's announcement.

Hehehe… Life is so easy when you're surrounded by a bunch of easily manipulated dimwits, inwardly sniggered Bakugou, his sitting position and hand placement hiding the mischievous smirk tugging at the corner of his lips. In a single day, he had acquired full bill coverage for a whole month, a grocery delivery convoy and a bunch of servants to do the house chore. *You're one hundred years too early to try to one-up me, you fuckin' idiots. Hehehehe!*

Chapter 32

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

"A school festival, huh?" dreamily sighed Midoriya, a happy grin slapped across his face as he walked back to the dorm. "I'm looking forward to it so much! Other than Mom, I wonder who I should invite? Will you be inviting your siblings, Todoroki-kun?"

"Maybe, I don't know yet," said Todoroki, leisurely walking beside Midoriya. The students had the right to two invitations tickets only so inviting Natsuo and Fuyumi would make a lot of sense - especially when the person he wanted to invite the most was as much of a prisoner to a single room as he currently was to the school grounds. But inviting his own siblings to the school festival sounded a bit too… embarrassing for him to do so he would mull over the matter until the approach of the deadline.

"Oh, wait! We don't know which will be the interactive café booth's theme yet so maybe I should wait before I send the invitation to my Mom," suddenly realised Midoriya, his green eyes opening slightly wider. "The school would never green-light any of Mineta-kun's suggestions but I don't want my mother to see me dressed in weird costumes…"

"I don't think Yaoyorozu would ever design anything that you'd feel uncomfortable wearing," pointed out Todoroki, head slightly tilted as he tried to think up a character or outfit that would suit Midoriya. For some reason, he couldn't quite imagine Midoriya as anything but Midoriya.

"True. And I might not even be on the serving section but helping in the food prepara-," added Midoriya with a small chuckle. But when he remembered who would be the kitchen's general, he immediately gave up on the idea as he felt a shudder go down his spine. "I should

probably insist on getting a serving role… If I were to work in the same area as him, Kacchan would definitely try to make katsudon out of my arms and legs like he said he would… I never ate anything he cooked but I don't like katsudon or myself enough to want to eat that sort of nightmarish dish."

"Bakugou's food is definitely the best I've eaten in my entire life but I agree that it's not worth risking your life over it," deadpanned Todoroki as he recalled that morning's homeroom session. He sighed, "I don't even understand why all of you would go that far just to have him make the café's menu. You do realise he's taking advantage of the situation to use and manipulate the entire class, right?"

"Yeah… I noticed that the moment he didn't yell at us for even suggesting such a thing. Especially with how moody he was before homeroom started," cringed Midoriya, his hand awkwardly massaging the back of his neck. It wasn't that he was particularly fixed on trying his childhood friend's home-cooked meals - at least, not as fixed as some of their classmates were - but there was this annoying bone stuck in his throat ever since he saw him fighting with Todoroki in the evaluation exercise. He mumbled, "I just thought that maybe eating Kacchan's food would make me feel a bit better so I ended up going along with the majority…"

"Why would Bakugou's food make you feel…" asked Todoroki, an eyebrow getting slightly arched on his brows the moment he heard that soft mumble. His legs halted in tandem with his words. His blank demeanour switched to a suspicious frown, his heterochromatic eyes tightening to thin slits. "I knew it. Midoriya, you've been in love with Bakugou since you were children, haven't you…?"

"HUH!?" yelped Midoriya, his whole body freezing in place. Once the initial shock went away, he quickly turned around on his heels and faced Todoroki. "H-Hold on! I think you're misunderstanding something here, Todoroki-kun! W-Wait, stop looking at me like that! C-C-Calm down and hear me out, or you might set the entire school on fire…!"

"..."

"K-Kacchan's just a childhood friend who somewhere along the way ended up becoming my bully too! Just that!" frenetically explained Midoriya, shaking his head and moving his hands around in the air all over the place in denial. "No one in their right mind would fall in love with someone who spent their entire life trying to kill them or urging them to kill themselves! W-Well, the same goes for staying childhood friends and going to the same elementary, middle and high schools… B-But I swear that has nothing to do with l-love or such romantic feelings!! I've admired superheroes since I was a small child and Kacchan was like a mini version of it, which made me admire him too. He's like a role model or an aspiration or, more like, a hero who I could talk with and play with and go on adventures with and help when he needed it. Not that he ever needed my help much, Kacchan being Kacchan. E-Even though he ended up growing up to that twisted, evil personality of his, I still think and view him as the same hero symbol he was when we were younger. He might be a bully and treat me like I'm trash but he's still… what I want to be the most. With this Quirk, I thought I was a step closer to Kacchan and that we could now truly grow to become what I had envisioned as a child but… I'm definitely not up to Kacchan's level, ahahaha. I don't think I'll ever be up to his level, especially in his eyes. Because we're childhood friends, he'll never view me as anything but 'useless Deku'. No matter how strong I get, or how many accomplishments I achieve, his pride won't allow me to be anything but a 'shitty nerd'. So… Um… I guess I am a bit jealous of you, Todoroki-kun. Oh! B-But it's not because you're dating Kacchan or because he likes you or anything!! You're the person he ended up choosing to become his equal and that stings... Seeing you two fight together like that… was really frustrating…"

As he heard Midoriya's non-stop panicky babbling, Todoroki's frowning face couldn’t help but be subdued back to his usual expressionless demeanour. A small part of him could relate to Midoriya's hasty explanation, after all - the admiration bit, in particular.

Midoriya was the biggest hero fanboy Todoroki had ever known in his entire life. It was normal for people to admire those that saved the lives of others and protected their daily lives, sometimes at the expense of their own, but this classmate of his took it all the way up to the level of 'compulsive obsession'. Perhaps he simply couldn't help but let that obsessive admiration leak out to his personality and stick to those that fit the bill.

That's where 'Kacchan' came into play.

I think I finally managed to understand Bakugou's relationship with Midoriya, inwardly noted Todoroki, eyes stuck on his friend as he continued listening to his endless chatter about Bakugou. His deadpan expression became that of a stone statue, however, as his brain physically reached the tolerance limit. *And I also understand why Bakugou wants to kill Midoriya every time he starts talking about heroes. Obsession or not, he's saying 'Kacchan' too much.*

"But at the same time, your teamwork was very educational and I feel like I discovered a side of Kacchan that I had never seen before," continued Midoriya, his voice accelerating even further and starting to shift to his fanboy mode mumbling. "I've wondered and fantasised countless times about what sort of Quirk would be suitable for Kacchan's sidekick, and I've always thought that someone with a good amount of mobility and sturdiness would be the perfect match to his explosions, if only to be able to keep up with his aerial mobility and not take any damages from Kacchan's Quirk. It was always along the lines of complementing his already overpowered Quirk. I never thought about the possibility of enhancing it even further! Since the nitroglycerin is formed through his sweat glands, a good source of heat is fundamental, whether the temperature is hot or cold. For example, if a villain appeared just as he had started his rounds during wintertime, being able to instantly heat up his body and produce sweat is something essential. His hero suit can only carry that much reserve nitroglycerin, after all. And how could I have forgotten about the nitroglycerin itself!! It's one of the most unstable explosive substances on Earth! It's extremely unstable in its liquid state already but it has a very high freezing point, becoming solid at only 13ºC, and the funny thing is that it's even more unstable and volatile when

frozen! The smallest of movements or impacts can make it explode! Fire and ice is the perfect combination to Kacchan's Quirk. Todoroki-kun, you truly are the perfect match for Kacchan! I know it's biologically impossible, but now I can't help but wonder what a child born from both of your Quirks would be- OUCH! T-That's hot! T-Todoroki-kun, what was that for…!?"

"You're not the only one who gets jealous at times," deadpanned Todoroki, putting out the small flame on his fingertip that he had used to lightly burn the tip of Midoriya's nose. "Even if you're not in love with Bakugou and only view him as a hero role model, you're still talking too much about him. I don't like it. Stop talking about my koala."

"Pfffft!" snorted Midoriya, slapping his hands on top of his mouth to keep himself from laughing straight on Todoroki's half expressionless, half sulking face. Did he mishear something or had Todoroki truly called Bakugou 'his koala' just now? He chuckled, "You two truly are head over heels in love with each other, aren't you?"

"Is it that obvious?" asked Todoroki, his head slightly cocked to the left. He didn't remember acting overly chummy with Bakugou while others were around and none of the two was the flirting type, to begin with. Maybe Midoriya was simply overly conscious of them since he was an observation specialist.

"Todoroki-kun… are you asking that for real or are you being sarcastic right now?" asked back Midoriya, his eyes round with surprise. He already knew Todoroki had a hard time reading in between the lines but this was pushing denseness a bit too far… When he saw Todoroki tilting his head even further, Midoriya couldn't help but facepalm himself. "I didn't think it was this bad… Um, try to not talk too much about your relationship with Kacchan from now. I'm already in his death row but please spare the rest of our classmates from the same ending. Especially Kirishima-kun, Kaminari-kun and Sero-kun. Kacchan might not show it but he does value his friendship with them. It would be too pitiful if too much information was shared and he started acting even more awkwardly around them. So whenever you

want to talk about Kacchan, you can come to me. A-And not for the reasons you're thinking about, Todoroki-kun, you can put those flames out…"

Burning with jealousy just gained a whole new meaning in my dictionary, inwardly sighed Midoriya once Todoroki's left side stopped shining in flaming orange.

"I don't necessarily have much to say to you about Bakugou," said Todoroki, finally resuming their return to the dorm with Midoriya. "And when I talk with others about him, it's because they initiate the conversation. If it's different with you, it's because you know and understand Bakugou so well. Unfortunately."

"The 'unfortunately' remark was uncalled for…" softly grumbled Midoriya despite himself, twisting his nose just the slightest in offence.

"I don't have much to say but…" continued Todoroki, not having heard those quiet mumbles beside him. "Midoriya, could you do me a favour?"

"Eh?"

-.-

I think it's time I impose some limits in my friendship with you, Bakugou…, inwardly cringed Kirishima, impatiently walking back and forth in the middle of the street. Such movements were warranting him quite a lot of stares from other passersby but he preferred those curious stares to whatever judgemental glances he would get the moment he stepped inside of the drugstore, grabbed the items in the shopping list and reached the cash register. *No matter how you look at it, it's just wrong to*

ask your best friend to go buy condoms and lube for you just because you can't leave the school grounds for a full month!!! The last thing I want to know about is yours and Todoroki's sex life! I swear it is! Our rooms are right next to one another, you know!? The walls are sturdy and thick, yeah, but I hear your yells and roars very well every time you get pissed at something! I want it to stay at just that…!

"There's no meaning in thinking all of that when the culprit is nonchalantly getting his homework done in his bedroom…" sighed Kirishima, his walking halting and head dropping lifelessly in utter defeat. He placed the grocery bags down, took a deep breath and slapped his face with both hands. "Alright, Kirishima Eijirou, you're a man, you can do this! It's just condoms and lube, nothing out of the ordinary for a healthy young man to buy. Rather, it wouldn't be manly at all to be careless during intercourse. Yes, exactly! Safety and health before anything else! I will have absolutely no thoughts about the ones who will be using them! No thoughts at all! Okay, man up and let's do this! It's for the sake of your bro! You can do something as easy as this for Bakugou, right? Of course you can, Kirishima Eijirou! If Bakugou entrusted you with this mission, you'll get it done! Alright, I'm really going in this time. One, two, three, here I-"

"K-Kirishima…kun?"

"WOAH!!" loudly yelped Kirishima with a not-that-manly voice. He slowly turned his head in the direction of the familiar voice that had called his name. "H-Hey there, Midoriya. Out shopping…?"

"Ah… Um… No. I mean, yes…" babbled Midoriya, his face bright red as his eyes fluttered all over the shopping district's street except in his classmate's direction. "W-What about you…? Shopping too?"

"Um… I did promise Bakugou I'd go grocery shopping for him so… Ah..." nervously answered Kirishima, his heart thundering inside of his ribcage. "Here I am, I guess… Aha… Ahahaha…"

"Oh no…" gasped Midoriya, his face instantly getting all drained from blood and turning ghostly pale in comparison to the previous red blush. The list in Kirishima's hand, the grocery bags by his feet, his current fidgeting stance while in front of a drugstore…… He grabbed the sides of his head and loudly yelled at the far, far away sky, "Kacchan, are you out of your mind!? And I'm no better, being foolishly brainwashed by Todoroki-kun into doing his shopping for him too!!"

"What? Todoroki also asked you to buy…?" incredulously asked Kirishima, slowly motioning the shopping list to Midoriya to show him the last two items in it. The way Midoriya's face exploded into another blush and a pained whine escaped from his throat was answer more than enough. "Bakugou doing something like this is one thing but I wasn't expecting Todoroki to think up the same strategy…"

"I think it's the other way around… Todoroki-kun is dense enough to not understand how ridiculous this shopping request is but Kacchan definitely had to swallow a lot of his pride to ask someone else to buy… *those* for him," sighed Midoriya, taking a couple of deep breaths afterwards to regain his composure.

"Wow, I… feel a little bit touched now," confessed Kirishima, lowering the hand holding the shopping list down to the side of his body. "So Bakugou loves Todoroki to the point he can put his pride aside and ask me to do something like this… Bakugou, you really are one of the manliest men in the whole universe!"

"This might sound weird but… Um, do you want to go in together?" inquired Midoriya, gesturing his trembling hand at the drugstore's entrance. "Two might make it less awkward… Or more awkward… I no longer know at this point, but pretending we didn't see each other is not an option anymore so… Ugh, let's just get this over and done with!"

"Let's do it, Midoriya!" acknowledged Kirishima, smashing his hardened fists together before he grabbed the grocery bags once again and dived headfirst inside of the drugstore.

Luckily for them, the store wasn't particularly busy at the moment so they immediately rushed to the 'adult' section, filled from top to bottom with products and small advertisement leaflets that gave them the urge to cover their eyes.

"Why are there so many kinds…?" groaned Kirishima, his eyes jumping around through all kinds of condom packages and lubricant bottles and flasks. He whispered, "Which ones are we supposed to take?"

"I can't believe I'm about to do this… And for Kacchan, out of everyone…" mumbled Midoriya under his breath as he removed his cell phone from his jacket's pocket. His browsing history was about to get a whole mile weirder than it usually already was. He definitely never expected to be browsing the Internet for the recommended brands for anal sex…

"I probably shouldn't be saying this but… Since they need to buy this, it means they want to… you know, have sex and the like… right?" whispered Kirishima, crouching down slightly to check the products on the lower shelves. He gulped down hard and swallowed in dry. "I tried to not think about it but it's impossible at this point. Two men means one of them will be using *that place* , right? Which one of them will do it and which one will take it?"

"Kirishima-kun, my brain is already about to enter into overload, please don't make me think about the absolute forbidden…" sobbed Midoriya, regretting for the nth time getting associated with Bakugou Katsuki. He might not have been the one asking him to buy the condoms and lube but he was still the biggest nemesis in his whole life, directly and indirectly.

"No but… I can't imagine either of the two doing it. Not that I want to imagine it in the first place, mind you. But who is it going to be?" inquired Kirishima, his gaze tightening slightly as he stared at the condom packages without really staring at them. His brain was too busy thinking about all of the possibilities to lend its cells to the visual sensory organ. "Bakugou? Todoroki? Both? Something else?"

"Both… maybe?" mumbled Midoriya, lifting his eyes from his cell phone's screen to check if any of the mentioned products were available in that drugstore. "No, wait. Is Kacchan even able to have sex…? My image of him is so ingrained with his violent reactions to anything, I can't possibly imagine him not exploding with his partner if something, anything at all, was about to happen. But from the little I heard in the infirmary, I guess it could be possible for them to successfully do it without Todoroki-kun being sent to the hospital."

"Infirmary? Oh! Yesterday, I noticed that the nape of his neck was covered in hickeys… and he was complaining about Todoroki's horniness and persistence…" whispered Kirishima, grabbing two of the bottles of lube Midoriya was pointing at.

"Right. Todoroki-kun was also wondering about his sexual attractiveness yesterday during lunch break…" noted Midoriya, his free hand grabbing the package of condoms a couple of shelves above, size taken into consideration and all. "So, in the end, I guess there's a bigger probability of Kac……"

"Yeah, you don't need to finish that sentence, I get what you mean…" groaned Kirishima, passing one of the bottles to Midoriya and receiving a box of condoms in exchange. After a couple of awkward silent seconds, he softly cleared his throat and got up from his crouched down position. "Let's pretend this conversation never happened as soon as we pay for these."

"I think it's impossible to pretend we don't know what we know but I like to be alive and I'm sure Kacchan also enjoys not being a murderer so… I'll try my best," cringed Midoriya, a shudder crawling up his spine just by imagining the gruesome death that awaited him if Bakugou was to ever find out about the conversation that went on in that drugstore, that evening.

"Todoroki owes you one now so just ask for his help if Bakugou ever tries to murder you because of their relationship," laughed Kirishima, giving a motivating slap on Midoriya's back as he cautiously walked up to one of the cashiers.

Frozen in place, sweat started dribbling down Midoriya's temples. His brain had gone into full panic mode and it showed on his ghastly pale face.

But… Todoroki-kun is the one most likely to kill me because of their relationship… What am I supposed to do if the two top students of U.A.'s hero course suddenly decide I know too much!?

Chapter End Notes

> Bless these two boys! You should be thanking your friends for their support, not planning their executions out of jealousy or tsundere embarrassment, you idiot couple XD

Chapter 33

“Crap… I forgot the closest post box is outside of the school grounds…” mumbled Todoroki to himself, his feet rooted in place right in front of U.A.’s open main gate. He wasn’t even going to attempt to stick an arm out of the school grounds, he was absolutely sure the security system would go off on him and the humongous metal plates would come dropping down from the sky. He was already in plenty of trouble because of Bakugou’s hasty decisions, he couldn’t afford to also make their situation even worse. With a sigh, he dropped his gaze down to the letter on his hands. “I should have asked Midoriya to drop this at the post office or something too…”

"Thinking about running away already?" asked a snarky voice right from behind him. When Todoroki looked over his shoulder, he found Bakugou there, dressed up in his usual running attire and earphones blasting away on his ears. With a small sigh to level his breathing rhythm, he walked up to Todoroki. “You’d have better luck trying to find another hole in the wall than straightforwardly walking out the front gate.”

“I just wanted to send a letter,” deadpanned Todoroki, cautiously observing Bakugou with slight suspicion. He sure hoped the reason why he came for a run that evening wasn’t to search the school grounds for another ‘backdoor’. “But I forgot there are no post boxes inside of the school grounds.”

“A letter? Can’t you just call or text or even email whoever that letter’s for?” scoffed Bakugou, rolling his eyes around at how old fashioned Todoroki could be at times.

“I prefer to contact my mother like this… at least for now,” said Todoroki, a small smile present on his lips as he glanced down at the letter once again.

“Just ask one of my slaves to take it to the post office then,” suggested Bakugou with an evil smirk. He gave a quick shrug with his shoulders and departed from the main gate's proximity. "I have them all at my beck and call for around a month so have your pick of the crop."

"I was thinking about doing that, but not with such tyrannical methods," deadpanned Todoroki once again, gently putting the letter inside of his pocket. He followed right after Bakugou, as he seemed to be done with his running routine already. "If you ask your friends for a favour, they'll comply with your request."

Midoriya will, at least, added Todoroki in the back of his mind, his expressionless demeanour becoming even stonier as he recalled their last interaction with one another. He never thought he could be so petty when jealousy was involved…

"I prefer coercion and manipulation, thank you very much…" grumbled Bakugou under his breath, awkwardly adjusting his earphones despite the lack of musical accompanying. Since he had the dictator role in the class, he would use and abuse it to his heart's content. Bakugou Katsuki didn't ask others for favours, and he certainly wouldn't entrust others with any embarrassing, pitiful, cringe-inducing requests - unless they came in the shape of crafty manipulation, of course. It was no longer a request or favour but an order, after all.

"The whole class will eventually figure out you do, if they haven't all already," sighed Todoroki, rolling his eyes around just the slightest. "And you agreed with their school festival plans to get your revenge on Aizawa-sensei's punishment too, didn't you?"

"That's a part of it, yeah," scoffed Bakugou, a pout creasing his frowning features even further. "But the biggest reason is that I hate school events that don't have any competition in it. It's a waste of time. Who cares about school festivals in the first place? There are plenty of festivals and other stupid events throughout the year all over

the world. If they feel like doing pointless volunteer work, then they can go find a job in one of them, for all the fucks I give. Now all I have to do is create a stupid café menu, get some of them to do all of the heavy kitchen work and I'm completely free from all of that bullshit…"

Todoroki softly chuckled at hearing all of that grumbling and complaining. It was so very much like Bakugou to try to weasel his way out of a teamwork event, even if that meant he would have some crafty groundwork to do before he could dump the rest of it on his classmates. But what truly made this whole situation so amusing to Todoroki was how Bakugou was unconsciously spoiling their classmates underneath his usual mask of 'evil tyrant'.

"I can't wait to see what kind of menu you come up with," said Todoroki as he motioned his hand sideways and softly grabbed some of Bakugou's fingers with his own. "But go easy on us with the heavy kitchen work."

"Hah! You wish! I'm gonna work those dimwits to the bone," evilly laughed Bakugou, retributing Todoroki's initiative with a light squeeze of his own. "And you're no exception. There's no way they'll put your dense brain serving tables so get ready to experience hell in the backstage!"

"I have the feeling they'll want me to serve the tables, if only to attract customers," deadpanned Todoroki, some comments leisurely thrown to the air by the girls still stuck in his brain as afterthoughts. "The girls want to capitalise the resources the class already has available, especially those that don't require too much work or expenses. Or that's what they were talking about with Iida and Midoriya during lunch break, at least."

"Asshole!" hissed Bakugou, readily slapping Todoroki's hand away and turning his head in the opposite direction. "Go make an absolute fool of yourself in the stupid school festival then! I don't care!"

So cute, inwardly chuckled Todoroki. He grabbed Bakugou's hand once again and pulled him closer, lightly kissing his sulking lips.

"I'm not falling for it, you cheater," grumbled Bakugou, his pouting becoming even more accentuated. Even so, Todoroki persisted with the gentle pecks, one after another, slowly shedding the sulkiness and sourness away. "And I'm the manipulative o-"

Without any warning, both Bakugou and Todoroki whipped their heads in the direction where they had come from at the same time. Suspicious red eyes and blank heterochromatic ones closely gazed at a small patch of forest area.

Their intuition is always so spot on!!, inwardly cringed Kirishima and Midoriya, the former pressing his back against a tree trunk and the latter crouched down behind some bushes, both hands slapping their mouths shut.

"If you don't show yourselves, we'll call the security," warned Todoroki, his gaze tightening a fraction as he closely kept those trees and bushes under his gaze.

"Security? I'll blow whoever's there to pieces and feed them to the dogs," snorted Bakugou, small smoky explosions crackling in the palm of his hands.

Damn it…!, inwardly cursed Kirishima and Midoriya, exchanging a quick glance between themselves before they came out of their hiding spots.

"We weren't following you two or anything, we just didn't want to

interrupt you, 's all," tried to explain Kirishima, awkwardly rubbing the back of his neck as they walked up to the suspicious duo.

"Yeah, we just happened to arrive at the same time you two were passing by the main gate," added Midoriya, nervously fiddling with his fingers in front of his body. "We're also going back to the dorm so… Um… Yeah, that's all."

"O-Oh, by the way, Bakugou. Here are your groceries!" yelped Kirishima, his body mechanically thrusting the grocery bags in Bakugou's direction. He could hardly keep eye contact with his friend and yet he dared to call himself a man… "I guess it's better to give this to you now than at the dorm."

"Yeah, thanks," nonchalantly said Bakugou, readily snatching the bags to himself. Now that was one less task scratched off of his to-do list - and one more task to occupy himself with during his free time.

"Did you manage to buy them, Midoriya?" inquired Todoroki, since they were on the shopping and groceries topic. His eyes were nearly sparkling like a child as the bulky bags hinted to a renewed supply of buckwheat flour.

"EH!? Ah… Y-Yeah…" bashfully answered Midoriya, inwardly praying for the conversation to end as just that. Unbeknownst to him, he slowly took a couple of steps backwards.

"Thanks," said Todoroki, making a mental note to not forget to ask Midoriya to take his letter to the post office or post box the next day. He then looked back to Bakugou and gave him an expressionless thumbs up. "We now have shelter, food and sex for a whole month."

"Huh…?" interjected Bakugou, his mouth hanging wide open for the

couple of seconds it took him to process the information. His whole face exploded in a furious blush, spread all the way to the tips of his ears. Bakugou grabbed the collar of Todoroki's clothes and furiously yanked him back and forth. "Are you out of your damned mind!? What the fuck are you using my fuckin' slaves for!? That's it! Today's the day I fuckin' strangle you to death with your soba noodles, you fuckin' idiot!!! AAAARGHH!!"

"W-Woah, Kacchan, calm down!" intervened Midoriya, rushing over to his friend's rescue as he was shaken around like a rag. "Calm down!!"

"You're seriously gonna break Todoroki's neck at this rate!" yelped Kirishima, putting himself behind Bakugou to pull him away from his motionless classmate. "And besides, didn't you do the exact same thing Todoroki did!?"

"Eh? You also asked Kirishima to buy them?" inquired Todoroki, suddenly springing back to life upon hearing those words.

"Ugh…" softly groaned Bakugou, halting all movements the moment Todoroki started staring at him with those handsome puppy eyes of his. His head and arms slumped down without any warning, shoulders trembling just the slightest.

"Bakugou/Kacchan?" called Todoroki, Kirishima and Midoriya at the same time, expecting everything out of Bakugou except that feeble silence.

" ***Dead men tell no tales…*** " eerily mumbled Bakugou, the way he turned his blazing red eyes in Midoriya's direction a perfect reproduction of what would be expected out of a blood-thirsty ghoul or vengeful ghost.

"Hiiiiiek!!" squeaked Midoriya, his body flinching from head to toes. He only had enough time to lean his head and torso slightly backwards before Bakugou threw an explosive punch in his direction.

"Bakugou, seriously, calm down, dude!" tried Kirishima, once again motioning his hands in the ferocious beast's direction to prevent him from committing murder. But he became frozen in place before he could - in the most literal of senses.

"Stop getting in my way, you asshole!" hissed Bakugou, glaring daggers at Todoroki for his uncalled-for intervention. A semi-circular wall of ice covered the ground on his right, caging Kirishima's legs and arms and Midoriya's legs and lower torso in a crystalline prison while keeping them safe and sound from the raging blonde. "This is all your fault, to begin with! So stay put and let me clean up after your fucking mess!!"

"But now we have double the amount, what's the problem with that?" pointed out Todoroki, his head cocked as he walked up to the ice wall and slowly started melting it with his fiery left side.

"How the heck did I fall in love with this dense dumbass…? There must be something wrong with my brain too…" groaned Bakugou under his breath, facepalming himself in utter defeat. "Hey, you two idiots frozen over there! You're one step away from getting your throats slit during the middle of the night. Think closely about that before you start babbling around about shit!"

With that said, Bakugou adjusted his hold to the grocery bags, turned on the music on his earphones and walked away without sparing any of them a single glance more.

"I ap-p-preciate the help-p-p but y-you went a bit overki-kill there, To-To-Todoroki-kun…" whimpered Midoriya, his teeth clattering around

due to his half-frozen condition. His body was so closely crushed by the ice wall, he couldn't even tremble with cold.

"A-A-Agreed…" said Kirishima as he tried to push his face out of the ice wall caging his arms in front of him.

"Help? I just don't want to make our punishment even worse by getting caught fighting on school grounds," confessed Todoroki with a completely expressionless demeanour, intensifying his flames a little bit more so he could melt the ice faster and return to the dorm.

They are more similar than they think, inwardly cringed Midoriya and Kirishima, silently forfeiting from that already lost argument.

-.-

When the three of them finally managed to arrive at the dorm and catch up with Bakugou, they bumped into yet another war scenario.

Todoroki may have managed to keep the bomb from going off on Midoriya and Kirishima, but it hadn't been defused at all. Hence, their classmates at the communal area were the next ones to take the brunt of Bakugou's furious embarrassment.

Or that's what it initially looked like.

"The fuck you mean I deceived you!?" roared Bakugou, yanking the earphones from his ears. "You doubting me now after being so damn persistent about me cooking the freaking menu!? Bring it on, assholes! I'm gonna put all of you crying and begging for more!"

Bakugou pushed the grocery bags against Todoroki's chest, took his sports jacket off and sloppily threw it together with his music player and earphones at his face.

"What happened?" asked Todoroki, sliding Bakugou's jacket out of his head.

"We were all talking about what kind of theme we should choose for the café when Bakugou-kun came back," explained Uraraka, softly chuckling to herself. "So Kaminari-kun asked him if he had any suggestions, as our official chef. Since Bakugou-kun started saying he wouldn't do anything at all until we figured out all of the details for the serving area on our own, Sero-kun countered all of that by accusing him of actually not being able to cook anything but his spicy meals and soba."

"Mineta-kun added insult to injury by calling him a cooking quack," said Iida, softly adjusting his glasses on the bridge of his nose with overly robotic motions. "And Kaminari-kun said he was disappointed in him. Ashido-san also mentioned something along the lines of feeling cheated by the lack of skills of the number one student."

"Oh…" expressionlessly interjected Todoroki, Midoriya and Kirishima in unison, their eyes travelling across the communal area until they reached Bakugou's busy-looking back - after furiously washing his hands, he was now angrily taking pots and pans, ingredients and other cooking utensils from the cupboards, shelves and drawers while grumbling non-stop complaints to himself about his classmates.

"What do you even expect me to cook when there's only crumbs in this damned kitchen!?" roared Bakugou, accusingly pointing at his classmates after making a mental list of the very few things he could cook up with what he had available there - he definitely wouldn't waste his own ingredients on those dipshits, that's for sure.

"I'll go request some ingredients from the canteen!" cheerfully announced Ashido, taking Asui, Satou and Shouji with her as helpers to carry whatever ingredients they could supply them with. Aizawa had already approved their themed café and sent the application to the principal, so they'd probably be allowed some leverage with supply requests if they said it was for the creation of their menu.

"Hey, Invisible Girl! I may not be able to see you but I still know you're here! Back off before you stab yourself with something!" hissed Bakugou, shooing Hagakure and Kouda away with his hand. He slammed the cutting board on the kitchen counter and pulled out a large kitchen knife from the drawer, immediately getting his hands down to work afterwards.

I'll get these upstairs, for the time being, inwardly sighed Todoroki after giving a quick check to the grocery bags in search of anything that needed to be refrigerated. The school provided a certain stock of ingredients for the dorms so all Bakugou usually bought was the ingredients needed to cook according to his own tastes - now Todoroki's tastes too, as the ingredients needed for his soba dishes occupied a large portion of what Kirishima had bought. A small smile on his lips, he approached Midoriya for his side of the shopping and went upstairs to his bedroom, his feet nearly skipping in happiness.

The communal area of the dorm, mainly the kitchen and its close quarters, became a lively gathering spot for class 1-A, all of them happily chatting and discussing the countless possibilities for their themed café booth.

Some made raunchy suggestions that were discarded at a drop of a hat (since Asui wasn't around to tongue slap Mineta into silence, Iida took on the role of cutting him off every time he mentioned the word 'boobs' or 'revealing') but most of the discussion revolved around mixing some joint acting by the waiters and waitress and get the customers to interact with them following an adjustable script.

Of course, their project was still a café so they would have to create said interactions and adjustable scripts with 'food' as the focal point.

As the conversation intensified and the whole communal area was filled with different types of mouth-watering scents, the 'scavenging team' made a glorious return with a plethora of goods.

"We're back! And we're stacked!" announced Ashido, a cardboard box filled with several types of veggies on her arms. Asui carried a similar box filled to the brim with seasonal fruits, Satou was over the moon with the bounty of baking products Lunch Rush had been kind enough to offer them, and Shouji was hauling four boxes filled with meat, fish and shellfish with the help of his multiple arms. As they carried all of the goods in, Ashido made a final announcement. "And look who's also here to help with the first taste testing! Aizawa-sensei!"

"You should be saying instead you kids dragged me here…" grumbled Aizawa, tiredly stepping inside of the dorm. He was planning on sticking around for a couple of minutes and then come up with an excuse to return to the teachers' dorm, but the unexpectedly warm and overexcited reception he got from his students made him change his mind. It wouldn't hurt to waste a little bit of his evening by tagging along with his class' after school projects.

"What took you so long!?" admonished Bakugou with an annoyed voice, glaring daggers at the returning group as he skillfully handled a large wok on the stove. "You wanna eat or not!?"

"Sorry about that, Bakugou, they gave us more than expected," apologised Satou, rolling his sleeves up as he also readied himself to go down on those baking ingredients. He might not be the most experienced of chefs but he would definitely not lose to Bakugou when it came to sweets. "Let's get some trial cakes and desserts done too."

With the unexpected guest and now the prospect of getting to eat Satou's delicious baked goods alongside Bakugou's dishes, the energy inside of the communal area escalated even further. Despite Bakugou's best attempts at snarky remarks and moody answers, no one seemed to mind it in the least. Rather, they just went along with it and followed his directions whenever they volunteered themselves to help with something.

I'm not very into school events either but being like this now and then is fun too, inwardly chuckled Todoroki, back to the ground floor to join in the high spirited group. Somewhere along the way, the school festival discussion and taste testing had turned into a cheerful class party that didn't celebrate anything in particular. Todoroki couldn't say he disliked that sort of ambience.

"How's the cooking going?" asked Todoroki, stopping behind Bakugou and leaning forward slightly to take a peek at the meat patties he was deep-frying in oil.

"It would be faster and easier without so many blockheads in the way," complained Bakugou, using his foot to push Todoroki further away from the scalding oil. "Stupidity and lack of skills waste too much time."

"Right," chuckled Todoroki, rolling his eyes around just the slightest. Despite Bakugou trying to keep him away from the stove and the potentially harming hot liquid on top of it, he leaned closer once again and quickly whispered something in his ear.

"HUH!? Why should I-" hissed Bakugou, a vein nearly popping out of his forehead in anger and disgust. But when he saw the sincere look on Todoroki's face, he quietened down and clicked his tongue in annoyance. "Go away if you're also going to get in my way…"

"Thank you," said Todoroki, giving a small peck to Bakugou's cheek before he went back to the sofas. With that done, he could enjoy the freshly bought products with a clean conscience.

A bit over an hour after the cooking spree was started, plates, bowls and cutlery were being brought to the dining table, chairs arranged so everyone could fit together during dinner time. Soon after, an assortment of dishes, side dishes and desserts were also taken to the table.

"What a feast…" said Kaminari, his stomach gurgling loudly with hunger. There was sweet and sour pork, broiled chicken wings, shrimp fried rice and shrimp tempura, with sautéed mushrooms with soy butter sauce, potato croquettes and menchi katsu sandwiches to go alongside. Steaming white rice was being kept inside of the rice cooker and there was a large pot filled with miso soup waiting by the stove. A tower of chocolate frosting cupcakes and kitten-shaped cookies occupied the entirety of the left corner of the dining table.

It's so good to be alive~, dreamily sighed the students, their mouths watering at the divine sight and smell alone. They were absolutely sure the taste of everything in there would be an even better experience.

"Here…" sourly grumbled Bakugou, slamming a bowl on the dining table, right in front of the seat Midoriya was about to take.

"Eh…? Ah… EH!?" babbled Midoriya, his eyes nearly popping out of their sockets at being offered a large bowl of katsudon. Not knowing what to say or how to react, he just stared at Bakugou with a completely flabbergasted expression.

"If you don't want it, I'm throwing this shit away," hissed Bakugou, his frowning glare becoming even more accentuated.

"N-No! I-I want it!" yelped Midoriya, quickly grabbing the sides of the bowl before Bakugou could take it away from him. "Um… Thank you, Kacchan…"

"Hmph! Go say those words to someone else, Shitty Nerd," said Bakugou, readily turning around on his heels and walking away from the table.

Hehe… Thank you, Todoroki-kun, thanked Midoriya in the back of his mind, happily grinning at his friend when he spotted Todoroki throwing one of his usual expressionless thumbs up at him.

"Ah! Where do you think you're going, Bakugou!?" yelled Kaminari, accusingly pointing his index finger at the retreating blonde.

"I'm taking a damned bath first! Do you have any problems with that!?" snapped back Bakugou. "Try spending an hour cooking after running a marathon through the school grounds, why don't you!?"

"Who cares about a bath when you have this glorious feast in front of you?" said Kaminari, grabbing Todoroki by the shoulders and pushing him in Bakugou's direction. "Todoroki, make sure Bakugou doesn't escape from the table until we're all done eating! Restrain him if you have to!"

"Okay," acknowledged Todoroki, leisurely circling his arms around Bakugou's waist to drag him to the closest free seat.

"Todoroki, you idiot! Shit, let go!" growled Bakugou, pushing his body in the opposite direction he was being pulled to but failing miserably at breaking free.

Bakugou was forced to share the same chair as Todoroki throughout the entirety of the meal, grumpily saying 'uh-huh' or 'yeah' every time someone directly praised one of his dishes.

"It makes me happy that everyone is recognising how great at cooking you are but it saddens me too," sighed Todoroki, using his free hand to take a bit of the sweet and sour pork - his non-dominant arm was still wrapped around Bakugou's waist to prevent him from running away. He sighed once again. "It's one less part of you I get to keep to myself only…"

"..." Bakugou silently finished munching the shrimp tempura and pushed Todoroki's chopsticks down as he was about to take another bite. He craned his neck sideways slightly and kissed him, sticking his tongue out just enough for the tip to ticklishly lick his lower lip. "Better, you big jealous baby?"

"That does make me feel better," acknowledged Todoroki, nestling the side of his body more closely to Bakugou. "You're right when you say it's the best way to comfort one another."

"Told you so," laughed Bakugou, a satisfied grin popping out on his features. He leaned his chopsticks to the serving plates and piled up more shrimp tempura and sautéed mushrooms on Todoroki's plate. "C'mon, hurry up and eat before those hungry monsters devour it all. You eat too much soba. Get some more damn meat, fish and veggies in now and then, will ya?"

"Says the one who eats spicy food at nearly all meals," scoffed Todoroki as he started munching on one of the shrimp tempura.

"I rotate between meat, fish and vegetarian spicy dishes so fuck off," grumbled Bakugou, lightly hitting Todoroki with his elbow. "Spicy or not, I eat better and healthier than you do with your shitty fixation on soba. Any of these are better than just cold soba and a few pieces of veggie tempura. Walking Diabetes' sweets aside, obviously."

"I can eat anything you cook, you don't need to use the school festival as an excuse to feed me healthier meals," deadpanned Todoroki, also adding a bit more of shrimp fried rice to his rice bowl. He had said that more as a joking remark than an actual statement, but Bakugou's sudden silence made him reevaluate the veracity of his words. "Eh? You actually did? Bakugou? Bakugooou?"

"Shut up…" mumbled Bakugou, lowering his blushing features even further as he pushed Todoroki's face away from him. He was startled stiff when Todoroki suddenly pounced on him, his bones creaking softly with how tightly he was being hugged. "Gah! You fucking-Todoroki, I can't breath, you dumbass…!"

"Guys, c'mon now… Not in front of Aizawa-sensei…" warned Kirishima, awkwardly switching his gaze between the flirty couple and their homeroom teacher.

"I've seen more than that already," said Aizawa with a nonplussed demeanour. He took a photo of the plate of kitten-shaped cookies with his cell phone and then gave a bite to one of the sweet treats.

"It can't be…" gasped Mineta, his eyes going round in surprise as he also glanced back and forth to the teacher and the two students. "Did your punishment get extended due to promiscu-"

"Mineta-kun, please take a nap now," said Midoriya, stepping in with a

quick chop to Mineta's neck. The small student's head fell lifelessly on top of the table's surface. Being knocked out was probably nothing compared to whatever Bakugou and Todoroki's rage combined could birth.

Good job there, Midoriya, inwardly congratulated everyone, softly sighing in relief. This dinner was going so well, explosions-wise, they didn't need Mineta's perverted delusions to ruin it.

This class really is one of a kind, inwardly sighed Aizawa, slowly chewing on the kitten-shaped cookie while continuing to observe and listen to the happy chattering of his students. *Bakugou only accepted to help with their themed café because of his own selfish reasons, but they still managed to turn his self-centred schemes into a positive group experience, whether they were aware of the manipulation itself or not. I have to congratulate you, Bakugou, you're growing up in the weirdest right way possible and leading the class along with you. Staying for dinner didn't end up being a waste of time, after all.*

Chapter 34

Bakugou had long known that Todoroki was a weird guy. For better or for worse, he was a stupidly dense yet honest person with a couple of loose screws due to those exactly same character traits - there were even times when Bakugou couldn't figure out if they were qualities or flaws, such was the fluctuation in the interpretation of his actions and words.

But this… This definitely topped the list of 'what did I do wrong to deserve this brainless moron as my lover?' moments.

"You can come now, Bakugou," said Todoroki, neatly sitting down on his futon as he invited Bakugou next to him by lightly tapping his hand on the soft mattress. Next to him was also one of the bottles of lube that had been purchased by their friends that afternoon. With a reassuring nod of his head, Todoroki added, "My fingers are ready for you."

"I don't need them!!" roared Bakugou, slapping the top of Todoroki's head in retaliation. With one of his hands placed on his hips, he urged Todoroki to pass him over the goods with the other one. "Hand that over to me. I'll do it on my own in my room."

"No," denied Todoroki right away. He patted his hand a couple more times on the futon. "My fingers or no fingers."

"My fingers or no ass," countered Bakugou, tightening his gaze as he closely looked down at Todoroki from his standing position.

"My fingers or no sleeping," also countered Todoroki, his expressionless demeanour becoming even stonier as he persistently pushed his agenda forward. To win a war, some battles would have to

be lost - whoever had said that probably didn't have a lover of Bakugou's calibre. If Todoroki allowed Bakugou to have his way now, who knew if he would ever get the chance to in the future?

"Threats won't work on me, you opportunistic asshole! Now hand that over to me!!" hissed Bakugou, his frown steadily becoming more and more accentuated. When he leaned his upper body down to snatch the bottle to himself, Todoroki quickly grabbed it and hid it behind his back. "Shit! What's even so fun about fingering a man's ass!? I can do it very well on my own, I don't need your clumsiness inside of me too!"

"I don't know if it's fun or not since I've never done it before but I'll try my best to not be clumsy," said Todoroki with a serious demeanour, pulling the bottle from behind him and placing it next to him once again. "You're already going along with my selfish request. I don't want you to do all of the work on your own."

"It's not like I'm- Argh, fuck!" cursed Bakugou, furiously scratching the back of his head as he dropped his body down and sat crossed-legged on the futon in front of Todoroki. He slapped his hands on his knees, his frowning features just as serious as Todoroki's. "Just so you know, I'm not forcing myself to go along with any stupid request or some shit like that. I'm doing this from my own free will. Yeah, okay, I confess I think doing all of this is pretty pointless. Just as pointless as my relationship with you is. Or as pointless as my relationship with Kirishima and all the other idiots is. Or as pointless as the stupid school festival. My life is filled with nothing but stupid, annoying, so very pointless stuff. But I'm still doing it, right? I can take responsibility for my own damned body just fine, I don't need your help with it. So gimme the lube already!"

"You're so stubborn, Bakugou…" sighed Todoroki. He wasn't very good at using words so how was he supposed to explain himself to Bakugou when he was already dead set in doing all of the preparation on his own? "You don't want me to do it because you can do it on your own?"

"Obviously? Why would I want others to do things for me when I'm more than able to do them on my own?" scoffed Bakugou as he crossed his arms over his chest, an eyebrow slightly arched as he continued staring straight at Todoroki's pleading face.

"Then all the more reason for me to do it," deadpanned Todoroki while grabbing his cell phone and unlocking it. He turned the screen towards Bakugou, the same porn website they had used for research purposes the previous night (and where Todoroki had spotted the ads for cosplay-related adult stores and establishments) in it. "You could barely watch porn without breaking into a long rant of everything that's wrong with it, how exactly are you going to tolerate fingering yourself enough time to get any preparation done?"

"It's not my fault porn is so fuckin' stupid, okay!?" roared Bakugou, pushing the cell phone's screen far away from his face. "The acting sucks, the plot and story setting suck, everything about it is so far away from real life, it's just plain dumb! My brain is not sex-centric enough to ignore all of that shit and only focus on the screwing! But that's beside the point! Why are you even bringing that up now? That and this have nothing to do with each other!"

"You're too naive, Bakugou," sighed Todoroki, locking his cell phone once again before putting it back down on the tatami floor. "If your brain is not sex-centric enough to be able to watch porn like a normal teenage would, you trying to finger yourself would be the same thing as impaling yourself with a stick."

"....." Bakugou opened his mouth to speak up in his own defence but found himself out of arguments. Whatever he said from this point onwards, it would only sound like petty excuses and hold no strength at all. Todoroki had just given him a shovel and Bakugou dug a hole with it without knowing it would be used as his grave. He clicked his tongue in annoyance. "Damn it…"

I won, inwardly celebrated Todoroki with a small, masked chuckle. He inched closer to Bakugou and put his arms around his waist, their faces a breath away from one another. "Do you want to leave it at this for today or do you want to continue?"

"...horny bastard… pervert... " grumbled Bakugou under his breath as he shifted his sitting position to more easily take his pants and underwear off. Once his lower half was denuded, he sat in between Todoroki's legs, his back well pressed against his chest.

"Bakugou, I can't see the important parts like this," deadpanned Todoroki, expressionlessly popping the lube's cap open. He couldn't even see Bakugou's face in full, let alone the tight entrance that was to be carefully stretched.

"My way or the highway. If you don't want to do it like this, I'm getting dressed," mumbled Bakugou, his head slightly lowered. It was so much easier to do it when in the heat of the moment, especially when compared to being straightforwardly asked for permission. Both methods were so very much like Todoroki, however, so Bakugou couldn't help but be swept along his pace. For as much of a horny bastard he was, it still felt good to touch and be touched by him - in other words, he didn't mind it as much as he probably made it sound.

"Okay," softly chuckled Todoroki, adjusting his sitting position so it could match Bakugou's. Whether it was out of stubborn resistance or shyness, he could at least go along with this small inconvenience on his side. Todoroki coated his fingers with a substantial amount of lube and gently smeared Bakugou's hole with it. "Tell me if it hurts, okay?"

"Yeah…" acknowledged Bakugou with a small nod of his head. His red eyes closely focused on Todoroki's fingers, his cheekbones lightly tinged with pink - forget pain or discomfort, doing it like this was so embarrassing it wouldn't be an overstatement to say he could die from it. Between doing it alone or with Todoroki, it would probably feel better with Todoroki but the level of embarrassment was way more

than he had initially thought. Which also led him into noticing and voicing out, “Wait. But there’s no difference between your fingers and my fingers. Won’t either of them feel like sticks?”

“Oh. I guess that’s true,” expressionlessly acknowledged Todoroki, his finger slipping inside Bakugou with just a small amount of resistance and an even smaller flinch of his body. Though his ears brightened into a red shade, Bakugou didn’t seem to be in pain so he slowly pushed his finger deeper in him. He tilted his head slightly and said, “Well, at least you won’t feel lonely.”

“Hey, just because I can’t fall asleep on my own doesn’t mean I’m needy or clingy!” hissed Bakugou, striking his elbow on Todoroki’s gut. That was it. Swept along Todoroki’s pace or not, he wouldn’t allow being treated like a fragile little thing that needed to be touched with extreme care. He grabbed the collar of Todoroki’s shirt and yanked him forward, his lips parted to readily start devouring his lover’s upon contact. After a long, deep kiss, Bakugou released Todoroki's clothes, a mischievous smirk on his face as he licked his lips. "You have more than 'sticks' at your disposal, you stupid 'tree'. Put them to good use already."

"I think you owe an apology to the entire koala population," deadpanned Todoroki, feeling slightly conflicted over whether he should feel aroused at those words or cringe at the mention of a koala using its tree for such purposes. Nevertheless, he once again feasted on Bakugou's smirking lips, his tongue swallowing the mischievous chuckles and replacing them with occasional pleasurable sighs. Long minutes of locked lips later, Todoroki gently parted their mouths with one last peck to Bakugou's moist lips. "I'm adding another finger so tell me if you-"

"I get the drift already. Haa… Just do it, no need to narrate every little thing," grumbled Bakugou, slightly out of breath from the passionate kiss. He felt his whole body shiver as Todoroki added more slimy cold lube and slowly pushed one more of his long fingers inside of him, but his mouth only let out of a moan when Todoroki’s other hand grabbed his erect cock and started pumping it, slow at first but quickly picking

up its pace. "Ahh! Ngh… W-Wait…"

"This should help you relax more than just a kiss," said Todoroki, slowly starting to move his fingers inside of Bakugou's still tight entrance too and widened it little by little. He tightened his grip on the hard shaft, the lube and dripping precum filling the bedroom with a second set of squelchy sounds.

"Ngh… Haa… Todoroki…" called Bakugou with a mellow voice. He slumped the back of his head over Todoroki's shoulder, his eyes closed tight as he tried his best to keep the sounds he was making in check. They didn't have the dorm all to themselves this time around so who knew if someone would hear them if Todoroki did something to make him even louder. "Ngh… Todoroki… Ahh! Todoroki…"

"Bakugou, don't call my name like that," warned Todoroki, his voice nearly an aroused growl. It was already hard to hold back with the erotic task his hands were performing only, the last thing Bakugou wanted was to rile him up even more with those sweet mewls of his when two fingers were the current limit. To distract himself and, hopefully, cool down a little bit, he slowly lapped Bakugou's earlobe with his tongue, teasingly nibbling and suckling on its rim.

"Ahh… Ngh… Stop… teasing me so much then… haa…" gasped Bakugou, softly grabbing and yanking at Todoroki's shirt with one of his hands. The pulling and yanking barely had any strength to it, his limbs having been turned to putty from pleasure and arousal, but on the brief moment Todoroki's fingers lightly bumped into a certain spot inside of him, his whole body jerked in reflex, his hand tightly gripping at his clothes and moans loudly escaping from his vocal cords. "Ahhhh! Ngh… Shit… Ahh!"

"Does it feel good here?" asked Todoroki, momentarily halting the jerking movements of one of his hands so he could fully focus on the fingers being clenched tight inside of Bakugou. Despite the twitching tightness around them, Todoroki slowly pushed his fingers towards

the same spot as before, once again obtaining the same sexy reactions out of his lover.

"Ahhh! Todoroki… Ahh!" moaned Bakugou, body squirming and shuddering non-stop every time that spot was hit. His chest was heavily heaving up and down when Todoroki slipped his fingers out of his hole, his whole body resting limply over Todoroki's upper body and the futon. The small break wasn't to last for as long as Bakugou would have appreciated it, for Todoroki quickly resumed with his sensual ministrations on his body, readily getting him as breathless and fidgety as before. "Wai- Ahhh! You idiot… Ngh! Haa…!"

"But if you're feeling it now, then that's a good sign, right, Bakugou?" pointed out Todoroki, readily devouring Bakugou's moans with a biting kiss afterwards. He was so close to snapping and pushing Bakugou down, all he wanted was to hurry up and finish what they started. If he wasn't to make him climax right there and then, he wouldn't be able to stop himself from doing more than preparation that night. He grabbed Bakugou's dripping cock and pumped it generously as he used the newly acquired sweet spot inside of him to double the pleasurable haze. Kiss after kiss, touch after touch, Todoroki could feel Bakugou's smothering body reach its limit. It was truly a pity that he had to silence his adorable yet sensual climaxing moans with his lips and tongue but those would have to wait for another time. He slowly parted their panting mouths, a thin string of saliva still connecting their wet tongues. Both his hands and Bakugou's crotch were coated in a sticky mess of lube and come, which dripped down on the futon's mattress, but there were no traces of blood so Todoroki could only deem this initial session as an absolute success. He sighed, his voice still slightly husky from arousal. "You okay, Bakugou?"

"Haa… I'm gonna fuckin' kill you… haa… as soon as I can move well enough to strangle you with soba noodles…" panted Bakugou, his body slipping down slightly more against Todoroki's chest. He rolled his body on the futon until he got laid down on his stomach and used both hands to grab the hem of Todoroki's pants. "But it wouldn't be fun to see a corpse at full mast so… should I give you a hand too?"

"Ah!" gasped Todoroki as Bakugou's hands swiftly grabbed his hard-on and pulled it out of his pants and underwear. "I can take care of it while you get some rest first."

"The hell you will! You don't get to toy with my body to your heart's content and then shoo me away once you're done," said Bakugou, his usual schemy smirk tugging at the corner of his lips. "Underestimate my stamina too much and that's the last thing your dick does."

"Haa…!" Todoroki's hands reflexively grabbed onto Bakugou's shoulders, his mismatched ardent eyes as if under a spell as he gazed at the slippery tongue licking his cock from the base all the way up to the head. That was much more than just 'a hand' but that was simply how Bakugou's 'evil' mind operated. One moment he was being melted away by Todoroki's touch, his voice moaning his name while pleasured from both the front and the back; the other he was greedily slurping and sucking on Todoroki's cock, his hunger and thrill so visible that his facial expression could only be called pornographic. With all of that, how would Todoroki be able to hold back when already on the verge of blowing up? *Damn it, he's too much for me…!*

"Ngh… Well, that was fast," said Bakugou, having pulled his mouth away just as Todoroki reached his climax. He wiped the creamy release smudging the side of his face with the back of his hand as he propped himself up to a sitting position. There was a small knowing smirk on his lips as he seductively licked his hand, his eyes daringly staring straight at his panting lover. "Heh… Do I turn you on that much?"

"You really have no self-awareness…" sighed Todoroki, shifting his sitting position on the futon so he could reach out to some tissues and help clean Bakugou's face before he was seduced into a second boner. He deadpanned despite himself. "You'd be a better porn actor than most porn actors."

“I’d be a better anything than most extras out there,” scoffed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes, also grabbing a few tissues so he could wipe as much of his come and lube further down on his body as possible. Not that that would do much, so ready for the second bath of that night he was. “And if I’m better than porn, it’s because I wasn’t acting or faking anything…”

“…!” Hearing those rare honest words, Todoroki’s heartbeat got even wilder inside of his ribcage. There was nothing that could match Bakugou’s sudden curveballs of cuteness and adorableness. A gentle smile completely transformed his blank demeanour into one of pure happiness. “Yeah, I guess that’s true.”

“D-Do you wanna go take another bath together?” asked Bakugou, softly grabbing onto Todoroki’s shirt as he kept his combusting blushing features slightly down. Did he accidentally ingest some of his nitroglycerin when he licked his hand? Because an oncoming heart attack was the only explanation he could come up with for his accelerated heart rate after seeing Todoroki smiling like that.

Or maybe Bakugou had to reevaluate how pointless his relationship with Todoroki truly was.

The soaring inside his chest felt better than anything he had ever experienced before.

Chapter 35

“So? Have you idiots made any decision yet?” inquired Bakugou, a nearly demonic pressure being exuded from his body as he remained lavishly sat down on the sofa, his eyes dismissively staring at his classmates. “Because I’d like to tell you all a little something, just in case you are plotting to have me cook dinner a second time.”

“And what is this little something, Bakugou-sama…?” asked Sero, he and all of his classmates swallowing in dry in both fear and expectation. None of them could deny Bakugou’s accusations since, well, they were truly planning on getting their ‘chef’ to cook for them a few more times until the school festival was over.

“Nitroglycerin is used in medicine to treat certain heart diseases,” started Bakugou, lifting one of his hands and putting it on display for everyone to see. “But too much exposure to it can cause addiction and withdrawal symptoms. Symptoms like dizziness, headaches, chest pain, heart failure and… death.”

“W-W-W-We totally have a plan for the café booth already!!” yelped Mineta, inwardly swearing to never, ever eat or touch anything that has been in contact with Bakugou’s hands ever again. “We do, right, guys!? Yaomomo, the stage's all yours!!”

"We were thinking of using a medieval fantasy setting as the theme," explained Yaoyorozu, quickly picking up on Mineta's intentions of freeing the entire class from assassination by nitroglycerin poisoning. "Rather than the conventional maid and butler setting, that would only allow us client-employer contact with the customers, if we were to invite the customers to our fantasy world, we'd be able to bring in the acting and script-based interactions. I-I confess that the details regarding the characters and story are still a bit hazy and undefined but that's simply a matter of deciding who will be the class members attending to the customers and the ones working on the food preparation and behind the stages!"

"Right, whatever," dismissed Bakugou without a second thought on that small explanation. "Who are the idiots who will be in the kitchen and backstage? Apart from Walking Diabetes, of course."

"Acting isn't my kind of thing so I'll help with the food preparation…" volunteered himself Kouda, shyly raising a trembling hand in the air.

"I did say I'd take care of all the BGM and sound effects so backstage for me," said Jirou, joining in Kouda as he walked over closer to Bakugou.

"I have absolutely no kitchen experience but you can count on me, Bakugou!!" announced Kirishima, slapping his hand on Bakugou's shoulder as he placed himself behind the sofa. "If you can teach me math, you can definitely teach me how to cook too!"

"Hmm… The acting sounds fun and I don't want to die from a heart attack but… Ngggh…" groaned Kaminari, a deep frown on his brows as he closely thought about the two options presented to him. "But sticking around Bakugou always turns into an adventure so kitchen it is!"

"I also want to be- Mmhngh!" started Todoroki, but a piece of tape was suddenly slapped over his mouth.

"Yeah, about that~" innocently said Ashido, throwing a thumbs up at Sero for his quick assistance. "We need you in the acting team so you have no choice on the matter, Todoroki. Sorry~"

"I'd prefer to be working on the backstage too," said Shouji, walking up to Jirou and Kouda. "I doubt that there are many fantasy-themed

characters that fit my physical appearance and you'll probably need some extra hands around."

"Yes, when you put it like that, it's kitchen and backstage for me too," acknowledged Tokoyami with a couple of nods of his bird-shaped head.

"Same," added Ojirou with a small disheartened sigh. "My tail isn't very suitable for serving tables, even if in an acting environment…"

"Uhhh… Now you guys are making me feel conflicted!" yelped Hagakure, waving her invisible arms above her likewise invisible head. "I want an acting role and to interact with the customers but there's no way I can do something like that, is there!?"

"You're the one person I definitely don't want in the kitchen so backstage or nothing for you," cut off Bakugou with a hmph, completely unaware of the damages his upfront rejection had caused in Hagakure.

"Well, I guess that's it for the two teams, then," said Asui, comforting the sobbing Hagakure with small pats on her back. "To summarise, on the kitchen and backstage team are Bakugou-chan, Kirishima-chan, Kaminari-chan, Jirou-chan, Satou-chan, Ojirou-chan, Kouda-chan, Shouji-chan and Tokoyami-chan, with Hagakure-chan working on the backstage only. The rest of us will be in the acting team. Except for Mineta-chan."

"Huh!? Why!?" yelped Mineta, a completely scandalised expression on his face at being suddenly pushed away from an active role on… anything.

"You can't help with shit in the kitchen," scoffed Bakugou with a shrug

of his shoulders. "Maybe you'd have a shot with washing dishes and taking the trash out, though."

"You're no good with heavy work or backstage functions either," pointed out Ojirou, softly massaging the back of his neck as he averted looking straight at his heartbroken classmate's face.

"You'd be lusting over anyone of the female gender during the acting scenes. Not to mention, you aren't tall enough to serve food to anyone except animals," said Asui as a final blow, completely wrecking Mineta for the remainder of the school festival's preparations.

"Great, now that the two teams have been decided, let's start with the role attribution and story creation for the acting team," instructed Iida, urging those on the mentioned team to join him over at the dining table for easier discussion.

We'll be sure to come up with acting skits that will allow us to experience the greatest of savoury and sugary banquets ever witnessed in this school, maliciously planned Ashido and Sero, the usual playful duo of the acting team. As if perceiving their scheme on a psychic level, plenty of other classmates gave them a thumbs up or an acknowledging nod.

"Kacchan, they're going to figure out your bluff eventually and make you cook them dinner again in retaliation," said Midoriya, softly chuckling to himself as he stayed behind by the sofa area. Now should probably be the most ideal time of the day to relay a couple of things to his childhood friend without being blown up to a crisp.

"Huh? What bluff?" growled Bakugou, his red eyes once again shifting back to a terrifying glare.

"I-I mean, yeah, nitroglycerin is used in medicine and prolonged

contact followed by sudden absence can cause those kinds of health problems but it's not like yours can actively do any of it," babbled Midoriya, his body flinching in fright at being subjected to that familiar demonic glare. "You don't have any heart problems and neither of your parents does either. I also never had any of those withdrawal symptoms, no matter what kind of bullying methods you used on me…"

"Damned nerd…" sourly grumbled Bakugou with a click of his tongue. "Go away already! Just seeing your face makes me want to food poison you for real!"

"O-Okay, I get it, I'll go…!" yelped Midoriya, his standing position stiffening at those biting words. He suddenly bowed his head at Bakugou and quickly babbled before darting into a furious run for his life. "Just don't forget that all of this is for the sake of a successful school festival, don't take any of it to heart, no matter how ridiculous their requests get, it isn't meant with any bad intentions, things just somehow ended up that way, so, Kacchan, please don't kill anyone!"

"...I seriously don't get that fuckin' shitty nerd…" grumbled Bakugou under his breath as he sideways observed Midoriya scurrying away towards the dining table. Following that trajectory, his eyes also ended up bumping into Todoroki, who was silently listening to whatever intense discussion the acting team was having. He clicked his tongue in annoyance yet again before he kicked his feet on the floor and got up from the sofa. He furiously barked at his chatting team, "Hey, slaves! Time to get some cooking drilled into your rotten brains. Rule no. 1: if you cut any body part, you'll be cleaning the blood with your tongue so don't fucking do it!"

I'm regretting this already…, inwardly sobbed the kitchen and backstage team in unison, gulping down hard the large knot already choking them into deep fright. There wasn't anyone that spelt 'spartan teaching' better than Bakugou Katsuki…

What came alongside Bakugou's spartan methods, however, was bulletproof, 100% guaranteed learning progress. In a matter of a couple of days, everyone in the kitchen and backstage team had fully mastered the basic kitchen techniques, such as yielding a kitchen knife without chopping fingers off, how to accurately peel, dice and slice several times of vegetables and fruits in a time-saving way and how to cook simple dishes in a team formation. What started as a completely disorganised and talentless kitchen environment was shaped into a three-star restaurant cooking team after a couple of infernal Cooking 101 lessons from Bakugou.

There was one small disruptive element in the kitchen and backstage team, however…

"Chef Bakugou, the patties for the menchi katsu sandwiches are ready!" announced Kirishima, smoothly passing a tray filled with hamburger patties covered in flour, beaten egg and panko breadcrumbs to Shouji, who was proficiently using his multiple arms to deep fry and cook simultaneous dishes in the stove area.

"Walking Diabetes, how are those sweets coming along?" inquired Bakugou, leisurely standing by the kitchen counter as he overviewed everyone's work and guided them in the correct direction whenever needed - much like a true head chef would.

"The cookies will be out of the oven in less than 5 minutes," said Satou, putting his muscles to good use to mix the colourful frosting that would be used to decorate the mentioned cookies. "Still on a trial basis, since the menu hasn't been fully decided yet, but these will make you cry for more, you'll see…"

"Dream on," snorted Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. He then turned his attention to another kitchen staff member. "Hey, Dunce Face. How are those vegetables coming along?"

"Almost there," announced Kaminari, steadily chopping potato slices into sticks so they could be later on fried by Shouji. Thanks to Bakugou, he could now make his favourite dish in a complete menu, which only made him more eager to slay all of those potatoes. As he happily thought about his cooking growth, he came to a halt on the chopping and turned around to share his thoughts with the rest of the group. "Oh, by the way. We're starting to run low on vegetables so maybe someone should go ask or buy mo- Woah!"

"Are you two fucking idiots!?" loudly roared Bakugou, silencing everyone in the communal area. "Air-for-Brains Invisible Dumbass, how many times have I told you to stay far away from the damned kitchen!? HUH!? And you, Dunce Face! How many times have I warned you to not suddenly turn around like that with a knife in your hands!? You were about to stab Invisible Dumbass over here in the fuckin' gut!"

"I-I'm sorry!" apologised Hagakure in a frenzy, quickly bowing her head at Bakugou several times. It was then that she noticed. "Ahh! Bakugou, your hand!"

"Huh?" growled Bakugou, looking down at the hand he had motioned forward to stop the knife's blade from cutting into his annoyingly perpetually invisible classmate. Knives weren't only sharp enough for stabbing wounds, they were more than able to cut skin and flesh alike if you carelessly grabbed them by the blade.

"Oh shit! Bakugou, I'm sorry!" readily apologised Kaminari as he saw the blood dripping down to the kitchen floor. He released the knife's blade and grabbed the nearest kitchen towel so they could stop the bleeding from the cut in the palm of Bakugou's hand. "Is it bleeding too much? Should we call an ambulance? Do you wanna sit down?"

"Crap, this is bad! We should call Recovery Girl right away!" yelped Kirishima, readily stopping what he was doing so he could also go attend to his friend's wounds.

"Are there any first aid kits around in the kitchen?" inquired Satou, readily starting to open the cupboard's doors in quick succession to look for any bandages or treatment materials.

"Shut up, you useless idiots," groaned Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. If a kitchen knife cut was enough to get his classmates panicking like headless chickens, they sure had a bleak future ahead of them as heroes. He placed the blood-stained knife on top of the kitchen counter and yanked the towel out of Kaminari's hands, using it to stop the blood from dirtying the kitchen even more. "It's just a small cut. Better that than having intestines splattered all over the floor…"

"Did something happen?" asked Midoriya, opening the front door and peeking inside of the communal area from outside of the porch together with Uraraka and Iida. His face paled at the sight of a blood-drenched kitchen towel on Bakugou's hands. "K-Kacchan… I told you to try to not kill anyone…"

"I haven't yet but I can start with you, Deku!" roared Bakugou, a vein nearly popping out on his forehead as he grabbed the knife once again with his wound-free hand and yielded its bloodstained blade in Midoriya's direction.

"What's the matter?" also asked Todoroki, peeking inside of the communal area like his three friends were. Upon seeing the bloodied towel on Bakugou's hand and the panicky expression on the kitchen team members, he immediately rushed inside of the dorm to go check on them. "What happened, Bakugou?"

"Careless idiots, that's what happened," said Bakugou with a certain annoyance, once again settling the kitchen knife down before anyone else could get hurt - not that he cared if a certain broccoli-shaped moron truly stabbed himself to an early grave or not. After applying plenty of pressure to the cut, he removed the towel and inspected his

cut by opening and closing his hand a couple of times. "Yeah, it's not that bad. It'll be healed by tomorrow morning."

"Bakugou, you're squirting blood all over the place like a broken faucet," deadpanned Todoroki, putting the towel back in the palm of his hand to continue applying pressure to the bleeding cut. He placed one of his arms around his waist and started guiding him out of the kitchen area and into the front door. "It's time for your weekly visit to the infirmary."

"Given these last few weeks, that joke sucks big time…" grumbled Bakugou, hitting the side of Todoroki's torso with an elbow strike. He wasn't amused at all at the mention of all the infirmary visits he had been forced to take since the nightmarish heatwave.

Recovery Girl also wasn't all that amused to see the same two students paying her yet another visit, even if she welcomed them to the infirmary just as warmly as always.

"It seems your wave of bad luck and accidents is yet to be over, isn't that right, Bakugou-kun?" sighed Recovery Girl, shaking her head in disapproval as she carefully cleaned the wound so she could inspect it better. After some stretchy minutes of deep silence, she concluded, "Luckily, the cut isn't deep enough to need stitches. But no using this hand for the time being, especially with your Quirk. Or would it be better for me to use my healing rather than bandage it?"

"Nah, bandages are more than enough for something like this," said Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. "I can use it to guilt-trip those morons into taking even more kitchen work off of my back. Especially after I warned them so many times about being careful with invisibility and sharp objects, hehehe…"

"You never change," sighed Recovery Girl, gently lowering Bakugou's

wounded hand to the side table so she could fetch the medical instruments to be used. She hopped off of the stool and waltzed to the cupboards lined with several boxes and treatment equipment. "Oh dear, you're going to use up all of my bandages. Todoroki-kun, could you be a sweetheart and fetch me some more boxes with bandages from the storage room next to the teacher's lodge? Some more boxes of gauze and gloves too, since we're at it."

"Okay," acknowledged Todoroki with a small nod of his head. He received the key to the storage room from Recovery Girl and departed on his small infirmary goods quest.

"Apart from this one more cut, how have the other accidental wounds and problems been going?" inquired Recovery Girl as small talk as she sat back on the stool and began dressing the student's wound. "I take it that your Quirk has fully returned to normal now that the temperature has gone back down. No recurring headaches in the same spot you hit your head?"

"C'mon, I'm health in person," snorted Bakugou with a smug smirk, also causing the old pro heroine to chuckle softly. Both knew such words weren't very convincing with the recent repertoire of infirmary visits but the relaxed positive meaning in them did brighten up the conversation slightly. He took a quick peek towards the closed infirmary door and then asked, "Since we're in the topic. How do you usually fix sleep addictions?"

"When you say sleep addictions, do you mean any sleeping disorder in specific?" asked back Recovery Girl, her hands and eyes busy on the ongoing treatment despite actively listening to the student's questions.

"Like, to only be able to fall asleep when a certain requirement is met," explained Bakugou in a roundabout way.

"Insomnias, then," acknowledged Recovery Girl. Two of Bakugou's recent visits to the infirmary revolved around him being fast asleep in one of the beds so that question didn't surprise her much. "I guess it would depend on how severe the situation is. Can you remember when was the first time you spent more than 24 hours without sleep, despite feeling tired?"

"..." Bakugou's face scrunched into a frown upon hearing that question. "...When I was kidnapped by those fuckers."

"Did the insomnias persist from there onwards?" inquired Recovery Girl, releasing a small tired sigh in the back of her mind. She should have also expected that answer.

"No, it only happened again when the heatwave began and made my Quirk go out of control…" mumbled Bakugou, quietly observing the nurse finish the bandage with some medical tape to keep everything in place. With it done, he softly moved his hand and fingers around to check how much mobility he still had in his dominant hand. "It was since then that it became a permanent thing. Well, I can still sleep but only if those few requirements are met. Otherwise, it's sleep deprivation hell all over again."

"I see. During those two incidents, you had to force yourself to stay awake, be it for your own security or the security of others," concluded Recovery Girl, organising the remaining bandages back in the cupboard. "Sleeping disorders are not my speciality but there's a big possibility that the intense stress you felt during the kidnapping incident caused your brain to unconsciously rewire itself to prevent you from sleeping during similarly stressful events, as a self-preservation and safety measure. The heatwave might not have caused the same level of distress but it did force you to revert back to sleep deprivation to keep yourself and everyone at the dorm safe from your out of control Quirk. On the other hand, since it was such a trivial situation, it also made that unconscious rewiring believe that you can't let your guard down even during regular times. Hence the insomnias."

"Okay, sure, but none of that tells me how I can fix it," said Bakugou, his frown getting more creases and wrinkles as he followed the busy-looking heroine with his eyes.

"You mentioned earlier that you can still sleep for as long as you meet a few requirements so I assume the insomnias aren't as severe as to reach the point of you not being able to sleep at all until your body crashes down," noted Recovery Girl as she threw away the blood-stained pieces of gauze. "Those requirements might be the solution, or we can actually call it, the cure you found to overcome those mental scars you acquired during those stressful moments. Which is a good thing. Time heals all wounds, especially the invisible kind. If those sleeping requirements of yours are something you can easily do during your everyday life, I advise you to stick to them. Do some occasional checks on your condition by trying to sleep without meeting the requirements. If you can sleep normally, then that means the healing has been successful. If you can't, just keep at it until you no longer need to. For as long as your insomnias don't get worse and you stop being able to sleep with or without those requirements, I don't think you'll need any medical intervention or prescriptions. Is something the matter, Bakugou-kun? Your face is unusually flushed. Did the blood loss cause a fever, I wonder?"

"Nah, I'm fine…" mumbled Bakugou, shyly covering his blushing face with his bandaged hand. With an even smaller voice, he grumbled to himself, "If I knew I was going to get an answer like this, I wouldn't have asked anything…"

I didn't need to know how much I'm depending on Todoroki. Damn it, now I feel like I've utterly lost against that dense, brainless moron, inwardly cursed Bakugou, sideways glancing at the infirmary door when he heard it sliding open to allow entrance to the 'requirements' and the boxes with medical equipment he was told to resupply on. He softly groaned as he slumped his back on the bed he had taken a seat on throughout the treatment.

"Done already, Bakugou?" asked Todoroki, walking up to the bed after setting the boxes on top of the nurse's desk. "Shall we go back to the

dorm? I'm sure everyone must be worrying about their head chef's hand."

"No cooking for Bakugou-kun until the cut fully closes and he can remove the bandages," vehemently instructed Recovery Girl, gathering a few packages of gauze, bandages, medical tape and a small bottle of antiseptic and giving them to Todoroki. "Be sure to keep the bandages far away from the water while you're bathing. And remember, no using your Quirk or do strenuous tasks with that hand. The more you use it, the longer a cut in the palm of the hand takes to heal. Are we clear, Bakugou-kun?"

"Yeah, yeah," grumbled Bakugou in annoyance, sitting back straight on the bed before he fully got up. He then leisurely started walking out of the infirmary together with Todoroki. "Thanks for the help."

"Sure thing," acknowledged Recovery Girl with a small chuckle. "And I don't want to see you in my infirmary until after Winter break. Come back then so we can have another talk."

"No way, I'm not coming back here ever again," said Bakugou with a grumpy snort.

"Did she admonish you for yet another sudden infirmary visit within a month?" chuckled Todoroki, leisurely adjusting the small mound of medical products against his chest and arms for easier transportation.

"Shut up, don't talk to me right now," grumbled Bakugou, accelerating his pace slightly more so he could go back to the dorm ahead of Todoroki. "I'm sleeping alone in my bedroom tonight."

"Eh…?"

Chapter 36

"Yes, I think that would totally suit him!" excitedly acknowledged Uraraka, clapping her hands together as she nodded her head a couple of times. "What do you think, Todoroki-kun?"

"....."

"Todoroki-san?" called Yaoyorozu, lifting her eyes from the notebook she had been using to register all of the ideas to be implemented by the acting team.

"....."

"I don't think he's in the right mindset at the moment to actively participate in our team's discussions," noted Iida, sideways glancing at the half-dead classmate sitting next to him at the sofa. "We'll just go with that idea for the time being. I'm sure he'll eventually say something against it if he doesn't like it."

"Very well then," acknowledged Yaoyorozu with a reticent nod of her head, her concerned gaze lingering on Todoroki for a couple of seconds more before she looked back to her notebook. "With this, I believe we have decided on all characters for the acting team. I'll be picking up all the suggestions that were thrown into the air today and try to create some small skits throughout the weekend."

"Ohhh! I can't wait to read the scripts!!" squealed Ashido with a super enthusiastic voice, energetically pumping her fists in the air. "And now that we have the theme and story setting all figured out, the kitchen team can finally begin creating the actual menu for our café booth!"

"It's a pity Bakugou-chan won't be able to cook for the next couple of days…" sadly noted Asui with a soft sigh. Although she wasn't as overexcited about her classmate's cooking as others were, there was no denying that she felt extremely curious about what Bakugou and Satou would create for the school festival.

"Bakugou?" said Todoroki, perking up at the mention of that name and readily sitting straight on the sofa. His eyes skirted around through the communal area in expectation but he quickly reverted back to abysmal lifelessness upon not seeing the blonde anywhere. He tiredly sighed and dropped the back of his head on the sofa's backrest once again.

He's so easy to figure out…, inwardly sighed the acting team, none of them sure about how to react to Todoroki's overflowing gloominess and despair.

"Um… Kacchan is Kacchan so…" tried Midoriya, softly scratching his cheek as he gave an attempt at cheering up his friend. "Fights and arguments will probably be a recurring event in your relationship…"

"We didn't fight or have any argument…" sighed Todoroki, his body sinking even more on the sofa's soft cushions. Despite Midoriya's best intentions, the lack of a fight or any type of argument between them only made Todoroki feel even more down and uncertain about the harsh words he suddenly received.

"Bakugou is probably just feeling pissy about the knife incident," tried Sero this time around after a few minutes of deep, awkward silence in the entire living room area. "You were the closest person around him at the time so he ended up taking it out on you. Don't take it to heart."

"He was talking just fine with Recovery Girl…" mumbled Todoroki, his voice growing even more sombre and depressed. It wouldn't be an

overstatement to say he was about to melt into the sofa at this point.

"You must have said the wrong thing at the wrong time, as usual, and annoyed Bakugou-chan when he was already in a bad mood," pointed out Asui, her head slightly tilted as he looked at her pitiful classmate. "You're a natural-born airhead so you probably didn't even notice it, Todoroki-chan."

"....."

As expected of Tsuyu-chan, she can kick a man when he's already down for as long as she gets to say what's on her mind, inwardly cringed the acting team, Uraraka going as far as to facepalm herself.

"W-Well, either way it goes, just give Kacchan a bit of space and time to cool down," suggested Midoriya with a certain hesitation, giving one last try at cheering up his friend and prevent him from fusing with the sofa. "Since you said you didn't have any fight, Kacchan is probably just in a bad mood, like Sero-kun said. If you leave him alone to his own devices, he'll go back to normal in no time. His mood swings change more times than the wind's direction, after all…"

"Yeah, Deku-kun's right!" acknowledged Uraraka, a large grin on her face as she patted Todoroki's slumped shoulder a couple of times. "Just sit tight and wait for Bakugou-kun to come back to you!"

"Yeah…" acknowledged Todoroki with a sigh, straightening his sitting position slightly as he forced himself to smile a little bit as his classmates. "Thanks."

The enthusiastic conversation about the school festival once again resumed but despite all the support and understanding he was receiving from his friends and classmates, Todoroki still couldn't focus

on anything being said. His brain was too focused on trying to figure out what he had done wrong to be able to think about anything else.

Did I accidentally say something that really pissed him off, like Tsuyu-chan said?, inwardly wondered Todoroki, a small sigh escaping from in between his tense lips. But while they were walking towards the infirmary, the only thing they talked about was the full process that led Kaminari into nearly stabbing Hagakure by accident. Once they arrived at the infirmary, Todoroki had spent most of the treatment getting the goods Recovery Girl had requested and, hence, hardly had any chance to interact with Bakugou throughout the bandaging process. *Then… Was it something that happened before the knife incident?*

Todoroki racked his brain around while recalling every single one of his latest conversations with Bakugou. The time they spent together had been steadily increasing as of late so there were plenty of moments to go through. But none of them seemed to lead him into a proper conclusion. Bakugou was way too volatile to both words and actions, to the point where even a one-word sentence could make him go off on someone's face at the drop of a hat. Todoroki wasn't an exception to it, even if they were dating. The only difference was that, usually, Bakugou would let it slip just as fast. Yes, usually.

If it wasn't something I said… then was it something I did or didn't do?, pondered Todoroki in the back of his mind, his head getting slightly tilted to the left despite the whole dilemma exposition being performed inwardly. A sudden squeeze struck his chest when he recalled a certain recurring event between them in the last couple of days. *Could it be the fingering routine?*

Since they had Midoriya and Kirishima running some shopping errands for them, Todoroki and Bakugou had been actively pursuing levelling up their relationship to the next phase every single night. Or, to be more precise, Todoroki smoothly persuaded Bakugou into letting him help with any and all preparations they needed to take to be able to have sex without someone ending up with a ripped butthole. Every night. Without fail.

Was Todoroki being too persistent? Was he asking too much of Bakugou when they had only been dating for a few weeks? Was Bakugou annoyed for having been tricked into doing the preparation with Todoroki, after being so insistent on doing it all on his own? Was Bakugou misunderstanding Todoroki's intentions and thinking that all he wanted was the sex? Was Bakugou tired of going along with him and wanted to put some distance, even at the expense of his sleeping hours?

Did I… completely screw up our pace, even after listening to all of Iida's warnings?, inwardly groaned Todoroki in utter dejection, his head once again wobbling back to the sofa's backrest. If that was the case, then of course Bakugou was pissed at him. Of course he didn't want to sleep next to him. *I guess I don't have any choice other than to wait for Bakugou to approach me once again on his own…*

Todoroki didn't want to be apart from Bakugou for too long but if it was space he needed, then that was what he would give him. Even though he really wanted to eat his home-cooked dinner, Todoroki would patiently wait for Bakugou to come out of his bedroom on his own. If Bakugou reverted back to his moody sleep-deprived persona, Todoroki would patiently look after him from the sidelines like he had done the previous time.

Bakugou usually waited every night for him to be ready to go to bed early… so Todoroki could do the waiting for once.

Or try to, at least.

The whole evening went by, dinner time was over and night fully settled over the dorm, but not even once Bakugou came down to the communal area. Todoroki dejectedly went back to his bedroom to get everything prepared for Saturday’s half-day of classes, his mismatched eyes every now and then sneaking glances at his door. But no one ever

knocked. Holding to one last little bit of hope, he went to bed with his bedroom’s door unlocked. He silently waited, impatiently rolling around on his futon every other minute. But no one came and sleep also refused to cooperate.

"I feel I'm on the verge of getting the same type of insomnias that Bakugou has…" tiredly groaned Todoroki, laid stomach down on his futon as he checked the time on his cell phone for the hundredth time. With another groan, he flopped his face down on his pillow. "This is the ultimate irony…"

He wasn't an early sleeper like Bakugou but he had gotten into the same sleeping schedule as him since they officially started sharing a bed every night. Hence, he thought he could keep that schedule up even with Bakugou absent in his room. But hour after hour passed and despite being well past midnight, Todoroki was as awake as an owl.

After one more long sigh, Todoroki pushed his body to a sitting position on the futon and then got up on his feet. When compared to Bakugou or even Midoriya, he wasn't one to act impulsively. But he wasn't known for having saintly patience either.

If the positions had been reversed, he was sure Bakugou would have kicked his bedroom's door down and forced his way into the bed, tying Todoroki down with anything at hand if needed. Todoroki obviously wouldn't use those same overdramatic methods but for as long as he could get Bakugou to hear him out, maybe, just maybe, he could clear whatever misunderstanding he was having.

So he grabbed his cell phone and keys and immediately zoomed towards the bedroom's door. The doorknob moved even before his hand could touch it.

"Fuck! You scared the shit out of me!" hissed Bakugou, his body

noticeably jumping in a startle as he opened Todoroki's door and nearly bumped into the owner of the room he was attempting to sneak into. He softly cleared his throat and scrunched up his face into a frown. "Why are you still awa- Woah!"

"That should be my line," sighed Todoroki after having pulled Bakugou inside of his bedroom and slammed the door shut behind them. "If you're just going to sneak into my bed in the middle of the night because you can't sleep on your own, you might as well not act so stubborn in the first place and admit you can't do it on your own."

"Can't you phrase it in a nicer way!?" growled Bakugou, sulkily kicking Todoroki's shin in retaliation. "You make me sound like a snotty brat who can't sleep without mommy and daddy on either side of the bed!"

"Am I wrong though?" pointed out Todoroki, a small frown also creasing his brows. Bakugou only clicked his tongue and averted his gaze as an answer. He sighed. "Are you done pouting on your own?"

"I ain't pouting," grumbled Bakugou under his breath, averting Todoroki's gaze even more. "I was only doing a small experiment. It was a bust so I came here to get some sleep done like usual…"

"Experiment?" repeated Todoroki, an eyebrow getting slightly arched as he received that unexpected excuse - especially when they had already reached common ground on how to best keep Bakugou from being sleep deprived. "Are you still trying weird methods to fall asleep on your own?"

"So what if I am?" grumbled Bakugou, turning his body slightly around since he couldn’t move his head any more than that from that position. "I think I've made it more than clear that it's impossible for us to sleep together every single night in the long run. Better do something about it now before it's too late. And no, don't you start

getting silly thoughts in your head once again about it! I don't hate it. I'm not avoiding you. I'm not angry or pissed or sulking or pouting or any shit like that. It's just that I hate this whole situation so much! Everything about it pisses me off to no end and I want it to be solved as soon as possible!"

"Bakugou, you're contradicting yourself," deadpanned Todoroki, his shoulders dropping down considerably. It was hard to hide the pain that hearing Bakugou say he hated that situation caused in him. Maybe he truly was as addicted to sleeping together as Bakugou was - the difference lied in the fact Todoroki didn't mind having such an addiction for life, for as inconvenient as it might be.

"I already said it's not like that!" groaned Bakugou, bumping against the side of Todoroki's body as he walked deeper inside of his bedroom. He grumbled to himself for a couple of seconds, pacing back and forth on top of the futon as he tried to figure out a way of explaining the essential points without damaging himself even more in the process. "Sleeping with you like this is the same thing as having my brain forcing me to act in this way or that way regardless of my will to want to do it or not! And I don't like that!"

"But isn't that how things usually work?" pointed out Todoroki, quietly observing Bakugou walking in circles. "People always do what their brain tells them to."

"Argh! That's not it! Shit, why is talking so damn hard?" gripped Bakugou in utter exasperation as he came to a halt. He placed his arms over his head as he crouched down, his slightly panicky face turned towards the futon. "I can't fall asleep when I'm alone. I can fall asleep when I'm with you. So I sleep with you. But isn't that the same thing as admitting that you're stronger than me? Isn't it the same as letting other external factors decide for me? I don't like it. I hate just the thought of it."

"But, Bakugou, sleeping together has nothing to do with strength or

external factors, right?" said Todoroki, walking up to Bakugou and crouching down in front of him. He placed his hand on the little section of his head he could grasp from in between Bakugou's arms and gently ruffled his hair. "I do it because I like it. Didn't you just say you like it too? It might have started because of the heatwave's circumstances but it was you that made me enjoy it, not the ridiculous temperatures or the constant explosion threat. And it's not like I like sleeping with you because you're the top freshman student. Your placement in sports festivals or tests or practice battles has nothing to do with it. It doesn't even have anything to do with your insomnias. I do it because I like you. It's as simple as that. Isn't it the same for you too? Or did something happen that made you think about it in a different way?"

"...When I talked with Recovery Girl about the insomnias, she said it's probably because of what happened while I was kidnapped but worsened after I lost the control of my Quirk during the heatwave…" mumbled Bakugou, his voice slightly muffled due to the position of his head. "I can't fall asleep on my own because my brain unconsciously thinks it's too dangerous or some shit like that… But I can fall asleep almost right away when I'm with you… Isn't that the same thing as saying 'hey, this moron over here is super strong and could destroy anyone in sight so go right ahead and sleep for as long as you want, he'll protect your weakling ass'? And that's totally lame… Totally not like the usual me. I don't want anybody protecting me. I can do that just fine on my own but my stupid brain seems to think otherwise!"

"You're so cute, Bakugou," chuckled Todoroki as he wrapped his arms around Bakugou's crouched torso and let himself tilt sideways until they both fell on the futon. Even with Bakugou's surprised yelp and the beginning of a growling admonishment, Todoroki still kept hugging him tightly, one of his hands sliding up his back so he could continue patting those wild, spiky blonde strands. "Super adorable. The cutest in the world. I never thought you'd be the type that overthinks too much and then drags it on in the totally opposite direction. Or maybe it's just your lack of self-awareness acting up again?"

"Huh!?" roared Bakugou, forcibly pushing his face out of Todoroki's

chest so he could directly yell at his face. But a quick peck on his lips made him halt enough time for Todoroki to continue with what he was saying, that heart-stopping gorgeous smile back on his features.

“It’s not a matter of you being weaker than me or me protecting you,” said Todoroki, still chuckling a little bit to himself as he lovingly stared at Bakugou’s dumbfounded expression. “Isn’t it obvious that it’s because we’re the strongest? Sometimes you win against me, sometimes I win against you, but no one would be able to beat *us* .”

“D-D-Didn’t I tell you to stop with that sappy shit…!?” yelped Bakugou with a stutter, his whole face igniting into a blush. Hell, he could even feel his whole neck burning up to a crisp. “Fuck, I feel like crawling into a hole and die just by listening to you talking! Shut up! Zip it! Die! And what do you even mean, sometimes you win against me!? When have you ever won against me!? Huh? Go on, say it!”

“You told me to not talk to you and that you’d be sleeping alone tonight, even though you ended up being caught sneaking into my bed in the middle of the night,” deadpanned Todoroki, forcing his voice to come out as monotone as possible. Inside, however, he had a certain muscle pumping at the sound of happiness. He could definitely afford this little revenge on Bakugou. “You also told me to shut up just now so I’m not saying anything. Why don’t you try to figure it out on your own? You like to do everything alone, right?”

“Jackass!!” hissed Bakugou, slapping his hands on Todoroki’s upper arms to push himself out of his grasp. Rather than release him, Todoroki wrapped one of his legs around his and locked it behind his knees, rendering him completely motionless on the futon. “Hey! Let go! Todoroki!”

“Don’t wanna,” said Todoroki, slowly pulling Bakugou even closer against his body. It would eventually reach the point where Bakugou wouldn’t be able to move his arms at all and that’s what he was aiming for - the nurse’s words instructed him to not use his wounded

hand so he was only following her advice. That's what he would tell Bakugou if he fought back more than advisable. "You left me all lost and confused to try to fix a non-existent problem on your own so we're sleeping like this tonight. I'm not letting go of you until we need to get up to go to classes. I'm still pondering if I actually should let go at all because whenever you're left on your own or with others, something always ends up happening. Like having secret conversations with Midoriya. Or asking Kirishima to buy condoms and lube for us. Or letting Kirishima and Kaminari get all sticky with you. Or cooking dinner for the entire class and our homeroom teacher. Or protecting Hagakure at the expense of your own body. So tonight I'll be using my boyfriend privileges to take advantage of the situation and keep you all to myself until morning time."

"Heh! Trying to steal the 'koala' role from me, are we now?" snorted Bakugou, a mischievous smirk slowly curving his lips. "Since you seem to think I've been doing all of that just for the sake of toying around with those idiots, let me elucidate you on a couple of things. I've spent these last few days constantly scheming and plotting the best path to steal your virginity. Creating a situation where the entire class is left in my debt, having Kirishima be the one doing all of my groceries and shopping, being in charge of only one simple thing throughout the school festival while everyone else does the rest, training cook failures into a functional team that needs minimal supervision, even sticking to a wounded hand rather than accept Recovery Girl's healing so I can guilt-trip them into doing even more throughout the weekend… Micromanaging all of that was just so we could have nearly no cockblocks for the next few weeks. Now, once today's half-day of classes is over, we can fuck all we want."

"You're pure evil," chuckled Todoroki, lightly kissing those smirking lips. It was scary how Bakugou could easily twist everyone around his little finger so they would fit right in with his plans or intentions. It was even scarier how his black-hearted genius could attract more villains in the future and put his life in mortal risk. But hearing the whole story behind Bakugou's wicked manipulation made Todoroki feel so loved. Being prioritised by an evil mastermind was strangely arousing and the way he never pondered about chastising Bakugou on it made Todoroki recall Aizawa's words. "For as long as you don't put yourself in danger, I'll be your partner in crime."

“You’re not scared I’ll do the same thing to you?” asked Bakugou with a mischievous purr, his lips a breath away from Todoroki’s. “I could be manipulating you as we speak.”

“You’re not that evil,” pointed out Todoroki, rolling his eyes around slightly at Bakugou’s taunting. He didn’t think twice about accepting his lover’s invitation and greedily kissed him, aiming for an adorably breathless moody koala. Or maybe now it was the sexy snake’s turn to be out - Todoroki lightly winced when his tongue was strongly nibbled on.

“You should reevaluate how evil I am,” chuckled Bakugou, leisurely licking Todoroki’s lips. He then playfully whispered, “Because you ain’t gonna get any right now.”

“…”

“Ahahaha! No matter how many times I see it, that face is always priceless,” laughed Bakugou, gently kissing Todoroki as an apology. He gave a couple of taps to his arm with his bandaged hand and urged him on. “C’mon, it’s impossible to sleep like this. I’m not going anywhere so you can let go. If we don’t sleep now, I won’t be able to fuck you so hard you’ll be limping around for the rest of the weekend.”

“I think you have it the other way around,” deadpanned Todoroki, reluctantly releasing Bakugou’s body and removing his leg from behind his knees. As a safety measure, just to be sure, he immediately grabbed the futon’s cover and comfortably snuggled both of them underneath it. In a matter of seconds, Bakugou was nestled against his right side as usual. It also took a couple of seconds for Todoroki to sigh his defeat. “I can’t sleep. I’m feeling too excited right now.”

“Pfft… What, are you an elementary school brat on the eve of going on his first school trip or something?” snorted Bakugou, stifling a yawn against Todoroki’s upper arm afterwards.

“Sorry, wrong word,” apologised Todoroki, turning slightly sideways so he could take a peek at Bakugou’s sleepy features. “I’m too turned on right now.”

“.....I seriously don’t get you……”

Chapter 37

Chapter Notes

I'm sorry for the long break, life this month has been... complicated, to say the least.
Covid completely ruined my year-long plans to move to my own house this month so these last two weeks I've been agonising about having to survive the 2nd wave in a house that doesn't provide me with living basics, like food, freedom/space and respect. Quarantine/social distancing is not easy in an abusive household -.-'
I'll try to update this fic every Friday (and some occasional extra tidbits available down below in the link in the endnotes of the last chapter) but I can't guarantee consistency at the moment. I'm sorry about that... However, I want to continue writing as frequently as I'm able. Laughing really helps during rough times and whether you're in a safe environment or in a dysfunctional household like my own (hang in there, one day we'll be free from our asshole families!!), I want to provide you with a little dose of laughter and smile, maybe even some squealing and blushing during the *cough* "robbery" scene.
Stay safe and keep everyone around you safe :D

"Once again, we are extremely sorry for what happened yesterday!" apologised Kaminari, his upper body doubled forward as he bowed down at the frowning demonic overlord sitting down on the sofa.

"You warned us so, so many times about it but an accident still ended up happening," also apologised Hagakure, only her clothes visible as she also bowed at her classmate. "You said you didn't want me in the kitchen every single day but I wanted to try to help more and you guys seemed to be having so much fun cooking, so I… I wanted to do it too! I'm sorry, Bakugou. I swear I'll listen to everything you say from now on so please forgive us!"

"Yeah, exactly! We're really sorry about it and we've been repenting since you went to see Recovery Girl!" added Kaminari, vigorously nodding his head at Hagakure's affirmations. "We'll follow every single instruction you give us to a T from now on and provide you as much

support as we can until your hand fully heals! Inside and outside of the kitchen!”

“If you can’t even follow simple instructions that a dumb dog could easily do, what makes you think you can support *me* ?” pointed out Bakugou, his gaze on the two guilty-looking classmates tightening even further. “A bandaged hand gets less in the way than two fucking idiots that don’t understand human speech. I don’t need yours or anyone else’s help. Now shut the hell up with that annoying whining and get back to work!!”

“Y-Yes!!” acknowledged Kaminari and Hagakure, their bodies instinctively straightening in obedience and readily turning around to run to the kitchen. They would have gotten there in record time if Hagakure hadn’t noticed something halfway there. “Wait, back to work? But what work?”

“Yeah, didn’t Recovery Girl tell you to refrain from cooking and doing any heavy tasks with that hand until it’s fully healed?” added Kirishima, comfortably sat down on another sofa to watch TV with Sero and Ashido - a task a little bit hard to accomplish when your attention was constantly shifting to the pitiful begging happening just a couple of meters away. “If with you in the kitchen it can be the disaster it was yesterday, I can’t even imagine what could happen with you not keeping all of us on our toes. Or what, are you just going to supervise us from a distance again?”

“As if! I have better things to do during my weekend than waste my time on the stupid school festival,” scoffed Bakugou as he slipped his hand inside of his pocket and took his cell phone out. After a couple of minutes, several cell phones rang with different ringtones at the same time. “There. Homework for the useless ones.”

“You already created a menu for our café!?” excitedly yelped Ashido, leaning over Kirishima to also take a peek at the email Bakugou had sent to the kitchen and backstage team. Sero eventually also joined

them as they went through the long, explicit to the tiniest of details document that contained the entirety of the menu to be cooked for the school festival.

“Hm? But this doesn’t seem all that similar to what we’ve been cooking lately…?” pointed out Kaminari, his head tilted to the right as he went back and forth through the long document, his eyes jumping around from menu item to menu item. “Actually, it’s nothing like what we’ve been cooking lately!! What’s up with that, Bakugou!?”

“Just because we’re in the same school, same class and same dorm doesn’t mean I’m a dumbass like you all are,” said Bakugou, his eyes once again gaining a glaring glint to them. “You think I haven’t noticed your idiotic plan yet? I no longer have any more reasons to play around with you so it’s time to get down to business and slave you around like the servants you all accepted to be. I taught you all of the kitchen basics you need to not die or kill anyone and I created the menu you were dying to get. My job is done, you’re all on your own now.”

“But this isn’t the menu we-” started Sero, an eyebrow slightly arched in incomprehension as he lifted his gaze from Kirishima’s cell phone. A growl immediately cut him off.

“Have you ever gone to a god damned coffee store!?” hissed Bakugou, accusingly pointing in the kitchen area’s direction while sternly glancing at his classmates. “You think they serve most of the things I’ve cooked for you fuckin’ retards!? You think they use half of the ingredients you swindled off of the school’s canteen to get a free meal out of me!? And you choose to do a themed café booth with a medieval fantasy setting, right? Then none of what we’ve been cooking so far can be put in the menu, you halfwits! Besides! You have Walking Diabetes and his sugar specialisation around so go play him like you were trying to do to me, why don’t ya!? He should have been your first choice when you decided to do a café booth, not me. You’ve fucked up good and hard so now take responsibility for your stupid, dumb plans and do what you signed up for! You’re going to follow my instructions to a T, right? You’ll support me until my hand

is fully healed, wasn't it? THEN GET YOUR ASS DOWN TO WORK RIGHT THIS FUCKIN' MOMENT, YOU DAMNED IDIOTS!"

"Y-Yes!!" acknowledged Hagakure, Kaminari and Kirishima with a yelping voice, their bodies immediately startling stiff before they made a direct beeline to the kitchen area. Even Sero and Ashido had felt a strong urge to follow suit with their classmates, even though they weren't part of Bakugou's team.

With a small hmph, Bakugou got up from the sofá and started walking towards the elevator. All of the micromanaging was now complete, he could officially forget all about the annoying pests around them for the rest of the weekend.

"Ah, Bakugou! About this part over he- Hiiiiii!!" asked Kaminari, his eyes lifting from the instructions on his cell phone's screen to the menu's creator. A screeching yelp of utter fright smothered his question, however, as he had never seen Bakugou look so scary and menacing throughout the months he had gotten to be his classmate.

" *Huh?* Are you deaf or are you just that stupid, Dunce Face?" ominously inquired Bakugou, his red eyes bloodshot as he looked over his shoulder and glared daggers at Kaminari. "I'm done with this stupid charade! Ask Walking Diabetes what you don't know, he should be able to do something about it for as long as he's not as empty-brained as all of you are! If any, and I mean, *any* of you bothers me with stupid ass questions or comes begging for help today, I swear you're getting the chicken nugget treatment. *No one will know who or what part they're eating* ."

"...okay…" squeaked Kaminari with a small voice, his face ghastly pale as his stomach churned around with nausea. He probably wouldn't be able to eat chicken nuggets for the remainder of his life.

Bakugou angrily punched the elevator's button while clicking his tongue in annoyance. Maybe he should have made the hurdle even higher but if he complicated what was already a high-level task for morons, he was sure they would really come to ask for his support. It was a gamble to leave them to their own devices with only Satou as a helping hand but…

One more push then…, inwardly grumbled Bakugou, stepping inside of the elevator and readily pressing the button to the 5th floor. Once he arrived at his destination, rather than walk to the usual bedroom, he went for the one next door. After a small sigh of resignation, he sourly knocked on the wooden door.

"Yeah?" asked Satou as he opened his bedroom's door. "Oh, Bakugou. I just saw the email you sent us. I wasn't counting on that kind of menu but it does suit our theme perfectly."

"Yeah, yeah, whatever," scoffed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. "Hurry up downstairs already! You're the resident bakery chef in this dorm so what are you doing lazing around in your room while those morons are potentially burning down the kitchen as we speak!?"

"Huh? You're not going to personally teach them how to make each menu item?" asked Satou, slightly surprised at Bakugou's withdrawal from Spartan teacher. He had been so vehement into drilling kitchen knowledge and techniques into every single member of the kitchen and backstage team (with the exception of Hagakure) that he was sure he had already gotten his hands down to torturing them downstairs the moment he opened the instructions document. That's why he had stayed in his bedroom and started going through the menu items himself on his own.

"You think I'm one to bake?" asked back Bakugou, his face twisting slightly in disgust. "That's your damned job. I told you that right from the start. So get your ass to work already! They don't have any babysitter around right now so it's all on you if they destroy the entire

kitchen!”

“Right! I’m on it!” acknowledged Satou, hurriedly returning to his bedroom to turn off his mini-oven and get his cell phone. He then dashed towards the elevator, giving a quick thumbs up at Bakugou as he added, “You can leave them and all of the baking items in my hands. I’m sure I can find a good method to keep them from burning down the dorm.”

“I don’t care how you do it and I don’t want to have anything to do with it from now on either,” said Bakugou, crossing his arms over his chest as he observed Satou get further and further away from him. “I’ve done my part of the deal, now it’s your turn to slave around. Besides, you know more about baking and shit than I do. Those idiots should have gone to you from the start rather than try to coerce me into cooking for them. Seriously, what kind of café booth serves meat and fish dishes… Fuckin’ morons…”

“I definitely won’t let you down, Bakugou!” declared Satou, stepping outside of the elevator but leaving his head and upper body outside in the corridor to continue speaking with his classmate. He was counting even less in having Bakugou rely on his baking hobby but now that he had been delivered such an opportunity on a silver platter, Satou would definitely make the most out of it and put his skills on display for everyone to see. His pride as a sugar addict was on the line. With that, he completely withdrew inside the elevator and let the metal doors close.

“Heh, easier than I thought,” snickered Bakugou, his lips curling up into a smirk. Everyone was under mortal threat to not bother him with questions for the menu training. Satou would be busy looking after their incompetent teammates - Bakugou had made sure he wouldn’t teach them anything about baking or beverages, just for the sake of leaving all of it in Satou’s hands - and he was pretty sure Sero would let his curiosity run wild and stick around the kitchen team as they ventured through the menu he had created the previous day, right after returning from the infirmary and before failing to sneak into Todoroki’s bedroom in the middle of the night. That would mean

the 5th floor would stay completely void of people for the next couple of hours. Except in one of its bedrooms.

It's time to claim my reward, inwardly declared Bakugou, mischievously licking his lips as he walked over to the middle bedroom. *Your virgin dick is finally mine, Todoroki!*

Chapter 38

Halfway through his homework, Todoroki had his bedroom raided by another of Bakugou's unannounced visits - having his bedroom's door suddenly slammed open had become such a recurrent event that he barely moved an inch from his desk.

"Are you done manipulating our classmates?" asked Todoroki with a small sigh, his eyes glancing up from his notebook to the blonde furiously trotting in his direction. Rather than an answer, he was nearly pushed down on the tatami mats as Bakugou dropped all of his weight on top of him, his lips readily swallowed by a biting kiss. Todoroki would interpret that as a 'yes'. "At least let me lay down the futon first."

"You should have done that already," snobbishly said Bakugou with a hmph, turning his face away as he unmounted Todoroki and sat down on the floor.

"I wasn't counting on being jumped in the middle of the afternoon," deadpanned Todoroki, his blank demeanour eyeing Bakugou for brief seconds before he got up and went to get what they would need. "With the way you cut me off last night, I was starting to think I was the only one looking forward to today. Turns out you're just as horny as me, despite your words saying otherwise."

"Shut up and get the damned things already…" grumbled Bakugou under his breath, sideways following Todoroki with his eyes. He had been more than patient throughout the entire week, despite all of the blockages that were playing against them all the time, so he had the right to be impatient and horny now that he had gotten rid of the inconveniences. Though there was still a tinge of awkwardness prickling at the back of his mind. *Shit, programming things like this makes everything even weirder… Fuck you and your denseness, Todoroki…*

"Bakugou, you're in the way," warned Todoroki, standing in front of the grumbling blonde with the futon half hanging from his arms.

"Can you be any less fazed than that, you half and half asshole!?" hissed Bakugou, lifting one of his feet from the tatami floor to kick Todoroki's leg. He grabbed the futon and yanked it out of his hands, a deep frown creasing his features as he growled, "You're the one acting as if you could care less right now! If you're not up to it, then just say something and stop stringing me along!!"

"No, it's not that I don't want to do it," mumbled Todoroki, dropping the preparation materials on top of the crumpled up futon. There was a light pink shade softly dusting his cheekbones as he crouched down in front of Bakugou. "I've been thinking about doing this with you so much these last few days, it feels a bit weird now that we're really going to do it."

"Heh, I guess you're not as dense as I thought you to be," noted Bakugou, a small smile surfacing on his lips right afterwards. It was nice to know he wasn't the only one feeling all awkward and weird inside. He switched his hold on the futon and lifted one of the sides in the air, aiming to spread it over the tatami. "Move it. You're the one in the way now."

"Do you also feel the same way?" asked Todoroki despite himself, sliding his body sideways so he could also tug and spread the futon between them. The inaudible grumbles he obtained out of Bakugou, alongside an intensified frowning face, made a smile also slip into his lips. His boyfriend truly was the cutest koala in the whole world. "Bakugou."

"What?" grumbled Bakugou, lifting his gaze from the futon just the slightest before two hands forced him to fully look up. Todoroki was getting payback for the sudden kiss from earlier with one of his own.

The long, slow kiss soon changed to more fleeting pecks as their bodies came closer together, clothes being removed out of their way with able hands. "Ngh… If you leave my neck filled with hickeys again, I'm gonna gut you in public."

"Can I do it in places no one will see?" asked Todoroki, his lips ticklish against Bakugou's neck as he spoke. He unhurriedly lapped his tongue on the smooth skin and gently kissed his neck, right above the fading hickeys he had left there earlier that week. The sight alone made him want to leave a new batch over the old one but he didn't want to go through another lengthy scolding on that topic, much less at that moment.

"No," shortly denied Bakugou, pulling his neck away from Todoroki and into safety. A sulky expression could be spotted on his features as he placed his hands over his pants and started removing them. "There's no such thing as a 'place no one will see' when you're in a dorm and school with shared bathing facilities and changing rooms. People are annoying as it is, don't make it even worse."

"That's the whole point," deadpanned Todoroki, inwardly sighing at Bakugou's own occasional denseness. Maybe one day Bakugou would come to understand how hard it was to resist the urge of rubbing on everyone's faces that the most popular student in their class was already taken. He sighed once again, this time outwardly.

"If your mouth is feeling that lonely, I have the perfect cure for it," said Bakugou with a voice dripping mischief. He leaned forward and tenderly kissed Todoroki, his tongue inviting him deeper inside of his hot cavern. Slowly, nearly sluggishly but very smoothly, Bakugou continued leaning his body closer to Todoroki as they relished on passionate kisses. His arms circled Todoroki's neck, with the fingers of his non-bandaged hand leisurely being caressed by his white and red strands of hair. Their naked chests were glued together and they could both feel the heat pooling on their aroused lower halves with Bakugou straddling his lap. "Haa… You already know what to do if your hands start feeling lonely too, right?"

Todoroki indeed knew what to do next, even without Bakugou's call-out on it. He had gotten plenty of hands-on experience on it thanks to his persistent stance against his lover's solo tendencies. He placed both of his hands on Bakugou's hips and let his fingers roam free, the fabric of the underwear sliding down his skin as he grabbed himself a handful of that soft ass. He coated his other hand with a substantial amount of lube before inserting a slippery finger in his tightness.

"Any pain?" asked Todoroki with a husky voice. Their foreheads rubbed against each other as Bakugou quickly shook his head in denial, right before restarting their wet, breathtaking kisses all over again. He pushed his finger deeper in him and a small moan was swallowed by the starving mouths. But if Bakugou's plan was working properly, they didn't need to stifle any sounds or voices, did they? So he tore their lips apart at the same time he thrust one more finger inside of Bakugou's slippery entrance and pushed them deep against his good spot.

"Ahhh!!" moaned Bakugou, a shudder striking his whole body from head to toes. Although he didn't climax with it, the suddenness and pleasure left him trembling and yearning for more. He greedily gulped down air a couple of times before throwing a dazed glare at Todoroki. "What the hell… haa… was that for…? Ahh… Wai- Todo- Ngh! Ahh!"

"Sorry but I can't wait," said Todoroki, hurriedly pushing a third finger into his hole. Bakugou momentarily clenched tight around his fingers but there was nearly no resistance as they widened and spread his slick insides further. Once the little resistance fully disappeared into an inviting, seductive tightness, he slowly pulled his fingers and carefully supported Bakugou's back as he pushed him down on the futon. "Can I put it in?"

"There's no way… haa… I'll say no to that," snorted Bakugou, softly rolling his eyes around at Todoroki's dumb question. "Quit stalling and… haa… hurry up!"

"Tell me if it hurts, okay?" added Todoroki as he fully slipped Bakugou's underwear down his pale thighs, moist from the sticky lube and leaking precum. He reached out for the condoms and put one on, not forgetting to add some more lube to both Bakugou's stretched entrance and his erect cock. "I'll try to not make it hurt but I can't promise anything."

"Heh… Bring it on!" laughed Bakugou, a challenging glint in his flushed features. "I'll wring you dry before I have the time to complain about anything hurting."

That's so like you, Bakugou, inwardly chuckled Todoroki, his heterochromatic eyes lovingly gazing at his lover amidst their lust. He adjusted the position of Bakugou's legs, grabbed him firmly by the hips and thrust his forward; his cock was readily swallowed by a slippery warmness that clung tightly to his hard length. "Ngh…"

"Ahhhhhh!" moaned Bakugou, his breath getting momentarily stuck in his throat as Todoroki's weight shifted towards him. If fingers had been previously compared to sticks, then the actual thing was like having a whole branch shoved in him. He took a slow deep breath and let his arched back return to the futon, his bandaged hand sliding through its damp fabric until he could cover his blushing features. *This damned idiot just had to do it in one go and without any warning…!!*

"Bakugou, are you okay?" asked Todoroki, leaning his upper body closer to Bakugou while keeping his hips as still as possible. Not an easy feat to accomplish when one has yet to come a single time since the lovemaking session began and when their cock was being pleasurably squeezed into action. Todoroki gently cupped Bakugou's heated cheek and slowly pushed his bandaged hand away from his face. His thumb softly wiped the tears sliding down his face. "Does it hurt?"

"You… Ngh… You seriously need… to lose that habit of yours… of shoving things up my ass in one go all of a sudden!" hissed Bakugou, doing his best attempt at an intimidating glare. Since it didn't seem to be working all that well, he kicked the heel of his foot on Todoroki's back - something he did end up regretting as it caused Todoroki's hips to buckle forward and penetrate him even deeper. "Ahh! Ngh… Haa…"

"I thought it would be better to do it quickly and in one go than slowly and bit by bit," confessed Todoroki, pulling his other hand out of Bakugou's hips as additional help in cleaning his tears away. Todoroki couldn't help but think that Bakugou looked even more adorable when crying but such thoughts had to be pushed to the sidelines at the moment. Knowing if he was fine had priority. "Like removing a bandaid."

"Did you just compare your fuckin' dick to a freakin' bandaid!?" growled Bakugou, his nose sniffing just the slightest as he regained his composure. He slapped his hands on his face and loudly groaned his frustrations away. "Aaargh… How the fuck did I fall in love with this train wreck of an idiot? I must have gone completely insane… Yeah, definitely insanity because there's no way I'm stupid enough for that."

"Yes, you seem okay," deadpanned Todoroki, his face completely blank as he straightened his back once again and adjusted both his and Bakugou's bodies for easier moving. He barely withdrew his member but that rubbing was enough to get Bakugou's whole body twitching and trembling. It was such a tempting sight and sensation that he could barely reign in his desire as he started thrusting deep into him. "I really can't go easy on you. Sorry, Bakugou!"

Don't apologise, you idiot, inwardly grumbled Bakugou, his mouth too busy trying to silence his voice to be able to speak out his thoughts. If he said it didn't hurt, he'd be lying, but saying that it only hurt would be a lie too. Each time Todoroki moved, Bakugou could feel both the pleasure and pain melting into his feverish body. It wasn't any less or more than what he had expected his first time having anal sex to be, given everything he had read about the subject.

But the burning gaze in Todoroki's mismatched eyes as he stared at him, the way his face looked hungry beyond starvation for him, the smouldering touch of his hands, even from his colder right side, as he caressed him, the feeling of their bodies clashing into union…

That tiny, tiny bit of pain and discomfort was just an ephemeral presence. It couldn't be compared to how loved all of Todoroki made him feel. And it certainly didn't change how much he wanted to love Todoroki either.

It was easy to let his inner voice soar those feelings of his loud and clear, but it was a completely different story to be straightforward about them. Todoroki was dense and yada yada but Bakugou sucked at social interaction just as much - maybe he was worse at it than Todoroki was, which was saying a lot.

Bakugou had never thought communication to be essential for his daily life and, as a result, he was now stumped on how to tell those things to Todoroki. The pleasure moulding his thoughts and Todoroki himself also didn't help him much.

"Ahh! Ngh… Todoroki…" gasped Bakugou, his body trembling in rapture at being pleasured from the front, by Todoroki's pumping hand, and from the back, by Todoroki's vigorous thrusts. He slid his wound-free hand against the futon and reached out to his lover's arm. "Todoroki… Haa… I… Ahhh! I…"

"Yeah… I know," reassured Todoroki, his voice just as breathless as Bakugou's. He picked up his pace even further, noticing that Bakugou was just as much at his limit as he was. The jerking motions of his hand quickened and tightened around his throbbing cock and Bakugou's hole clenched more closely around Todoroki's hard member in response, beckoning him to nail that precise spot. "Haa… Bakugou…"

"Ahhh! Ngh… Ahhhh!" moaned Bakugou as he reached his climax, his sticky release spurting over his stomach and chest. He couldn't quite rest yet, though, as Todoroki was still piercing him deeply while relishing in his own orgasm. "Haa… Haa… Ngh…!"

"Haa… Haa…" Todoroki slowly slid out of Bakugou's warm insides and flopped down next to him, throwing away the used condom. For the hundredth time, he asked, "Are you okay, Bakugou?"

"Yeah," sighed Bakugou, his bandaged hand half hiding his sweaty features as his chest heaved heavily to restore him from tiredness. He could feel Todoroki steadily inching closer to him so he lifted his hand slightly and peeked in his direction. Rather than say for the hundredth time that he was okay and not in pain anywhere, he lifted his head from the futon and quickly stole a kiss out of Todoroki's lips. He also felt his lips curling up into a smile but it was too late. He was far, far too late already.

"Ouch!!" yelped Todoroki when a closed fist came crashing down against the top of his head with the entirety of gravity's weight riding on it. He stared at Bakugou in utter shock as he gently massaged his head.

"Hear me out when I'm trying to speak, you dumbass!" admonished Bakugou, striking the top of Todoroki's head a second time just because the surprised look on his face was pissing him off. "Because of you, I completely forgot how I was going to say it!"

"But I told you I knew what you were trying to say," explained Todoroki, sitting up on the futon to avoid any future strikes. "I was a bit surprised at first but it was also so cute. I could understand everything you were thinking about just by looking at your face. Bakugou, public places are no good for us. It'd be too dangerous if others were to see you looking like that."

"Huh…? HUH!?" interjected Bakugou, his face exploding in a myriad of shades of red at hearing Todoroki's explanation. "My face? What the heck are you talking about? What's wrong with my face? My face's the same as usual! You fuckin' blind or something!?"

"No self-awareness whatsoever…" sighed Todoroki with a deadpan expression, his head shaking just the slightest in disapproval. He leaned forward and kissed Bakugou, taking his time feasting on his sweet, supple lips. A soft smile was present on his features when their lips parted. "I also love that part of you so you're okay just the way you are."

"Wha- You- Jus-" babbled Bakugou, fumbling his words all over the place after being attacked by another of Todoroki's radiant smiles. He briefly gritted his teeth and gnashed at the blush trying to creep into his face a second time. "Okay, that's it! You're really asking for it now!"

"...!" Todoroki could do little to nothing when Bakugou suddenly grabbed his shoulders and pounced on him. Bakugou managed to pin him down on the futon so easily it was hard to believe he had been gasping and mewling in pleasure underneath him half a minute ago.

"What did I warn you about before?" inquired Bakugou, a mischievous smirk tugging at the corner of his lips as he smugly remained sat down on top of Todoroki's hips. He seductively purred while leaning over Todoroki's laid down body, "Underestimate my stamina too much and that's the last thing your dick does."

He pushed one of his hands out of the futon and quickly fished for something on the tatami floor, his naked chest dangling right above Todoroki's inquisitive face.

"Time for round 2, Todoroki," announced Bakugou, enticingly ripping the condom's wrapper with his teeth. "Doing it just once isn't reward enough for all the hard work I had to do this week. I meant it when I said I was going to wring you dry so get ready. It's gonna be a *long* afternoon for the two of us, hehehe."

"Bring it on," said Todoroki, mimicking the exact same words Bakugou had told him earlier. Even the resolute smirk on his face seemed to have been caught from Bakugou's characteristic mischief. He cupped his lover's features and pulled him closer for a tender kiss. "I won't stop until you give up on wanting to wring me dry."

"I don't necessarily want to wring you dry, I just want you," confessed Bakugou, his smirk briefly melting into a heartwarming smile.

That's exactly what your face was telling me earlier, you silly koala, inwardly chuckled Todoroki. *Even if you can't put it into words all that well yet, I can tell at first glance how much you love me.*

Chapter 39

"I think we might have overdone it a bit…" tiredly sighed Todoroki, his body sprawled on the messy futon as he leaned his head backwards and peeked at his bedroom's window. Night had already fallen and the only source of light seeping into his room were the street lamps and the occasional shine of the moon.

"'A bit'...!?" wheezed Bakugou, sluggishly turning his head against the futon so he could glare at Todoroki directly. "You call a freaking sex marathon 'overdoing it a bit'!? Shit, I can't even tell which one is worse! My hunger, my exhaustion or my ass!"

"Sorry," apologised Todoroki with a non-committal voice. He was far from being the only one to blame for their completely drained bodies, as Bakugou had been equally keen on the idea of keep going. But quenching their carnal desires for countless hours in a row surely took its toll in their bodies.

"Stop apologising, you idiot…" grumbled Bakugou under his breath, slowly shifting his body to a more comfortable position. "You're making it sound as if I lost to you or some shit like that…"

"Thank you, then?" said Todoroki in the shape of a question, his head slightly tilted as he sideways glanced at Bakugou.

"...there's so much I want to complain about that one but I have no energy left for it…" groaned Bakugou in utter defeat, muffling a long, frustrated sigh by burying his face on the futon. A growling stomach suddenly reminded them that they had completely skipped dinner to stay confined in their sensual tryst. Bakugou groaned yet again.

"Should we go get a bath and a late-night dinner?" suggested

Todoroki, pushing his lower arms on the futon so he could half sit up. He reached his hand out for his cell phone, checking the time. It was late but it wasn't that late yet. He could bet that some of his night owl classmates were still well awake in their bedrooms.

"My hand is still no good so you'll have to sort out dinner yourself," sighed Bakugou, slowly pushing his body to a sitting position too. As he did so, he noticed the bandages covering his slashed hand were a complete mess after so much moving and grappling. He clicked his tongue at it. "You still have some of the stuff Recovery Girl gave me, right?"

"Yeah," acknowledged Todoroki as soon as his head popped out of the t-shirt he was dressing. He quickly put on a pair of underwear before he went to fetch the compresses and bandages from a drawer. "Did the cut open once again?"

"No but it feels all sore compared to before," said Bakugou, undoing the rest of the bandage so he could check how the cut was faring. There were some vestiges of dry blood but no signs of the knife wound having opened a second time. The soreness was probably a mixture of the scabbing process and the friction between the bandages and the sensitive skin. After quickly wiping the sweat from the palm of his hand with a moist compress, Bakugou started wrapping a new bandage around his hand with the same method Recovery Girl had used in the infirmary with ease. Getting it stuck in place was the hard part, as he only had one hand available.

"Wait, I'll do it," offered Todoroki, placing Bakugou's clothes on the futon next to them as he crouched down in front of him. He neatly arranged the end of the bandage over the back of his hand and stuck it in place with the tape. "Can you move it like that?"

"Yeah, it's fine," said Bakugou with a quick shrug of his shoulders. After moving his hand around a little and adjusting any needed portions of the bandage, he started to dress the clothes Todoroki had

given him, his movements awkward and clumsy out of tiredness. He released a long sigh as he got up from the futon. "By the way, can you even- Woah!"

All of a sudden, without any warning or apparent reason for being, Bakugou fell on the tatami floor. Both his knees and hips had completely given in underneath his weight the moment he stood up.

You gotta be kidding me…!, inwardly cringed Bakugou, his mouth dead silent as he quickly analysed and processed what had just happened to his body.

"Pfft," snorted Todoroki, half hiding his laughter with his hand. The lost expression on Bakugou's face was quite the sight already but seeing him so defenceless and useless was far too cute for words.

"What are you laughing at!?" hissed Bakugou, pushing himself upward with the help of his arms. He gave another attempt at getting up but his legs started wobbling and trembling like bamboo to the wind as soon as he tried to take a half-step. The mixture of exhaustion and the soreness on his lower back and hips had left his legs completely out of commission.

"I know you didn't actually mean it when you said it last night but you were asking for it when you said you'd leave me limping around," pointed out Todoroki, wrapping one of his arms around Bakugou's waist to keep him from falling once again. A weakened Bakugou was a very rare and precious event so he couldn't let it go to waste.

"S-Shut up!" growled Bakugou, his cheekbones heating up into a blush. He averted Todoroki's amused gaze as they slowly walked out of his bedroom and into the elevator. "After going at it like bunnies, what were you even expecting? Shit… I thought my legs and hips had been trained to the point of this not happening but I guess it's really true we

use a different set of muscles differently when having sex… Damn it, now I have something else to eat up my free time while everyone's distracted by the stupid school festival…"

"Don't push yourself too hard or you might get hurt for real, Bakugou," warned Todoroki, leaning his back on the elevator's wall after having pressed the button to the ground floor. He carefully supported Bakugou's body against his chest, his arms wrapped tight around his lower back as a safety measure - if his knees were to buckle down again, he was ready to catch him before he greeted the floor again. "We just overdid it. Even my hips feel heavy from all the humping. Intensifying your training won't fix your inability to walk straight right now."

"...at this rate, I won't be able to walk straight ever again…" mumbled Bakugou under his breath, his whispering voice getting partially muffled by the elevator's beeping sound and the mechanical clanks of the doors sliding open.

When they arrived at the communal living room/kitchen area, all lights were off and none of their classmates could be spotted. The kitchen seemed relatively damage-free so Bakugou deemed Satou's leadership to be everything his group needed to prevent more accidents or injuries from occurring. Those were very welcomed news as it truly spelt the end of his duties for the school festival.

The male communal bathing facility was also just as deserted so Bakugou and Todoroki used the opportunity to laze around in the large bath to their heart's content.

"Ohh, this is nice… I should hurt my hands more times…" sweetly sighed Bakugou, his eyes closed as Todoroki washed his hair for him. He couldn't let his freshly changed bandages get wet, according to Recovery Girl's instructions, so his lover had been left in charge of getting his hair squeaky clean while he kept his arm lifted in the air, his hand far away from water’s reach.

"No, you shouldn't," sighed Todoroki, his eyes rolling around just the slightest in disapproval to Bakugou's joking words. He massaged and rubbed his scalp a couple of times more and then motioned one of his soapy hands to the showerhead to rinse the shampoo from his hair. "Keep your eyes closed and hand away."

"Yeah, yeah," half-heartedly acknowledged Bakugou, leaning his head slightly back to aid Todoroki with the rinsing. He already felt so sleepy that even the touch of Todoroki's fingers on his head and hair seemed to gently lullaby him to sleep. It felt heavenly to be touched by Todoroki. Once the showerhead was turned off, Bakugou vigorously shook his head, both to remove the excess water dripping down his blonde hair and to wake himself up. Todoroki wouldn't let him hear the end of it if he accidentally fell asleep in the bathtub. "Done?"

"Only the body le-"

"Yeah, you're done," interrupted Bakugou, knowing very well what words were about to slip out of Todoroki's mouth and where they would lead them. He clicked his tongue at the blank look Todoroki was throwing at him. "Oh c'mon, don't look at me like that! I can wash my body with one hand just fine! Or what, all of that touching wasn't enough to keep you from salivating at the sight of my naked body?"

"I have the feeling you won't let me take a bath with you ever again if I answer so I'll just go wash myself," deadpanned Todoroki, taking a strategic retreat by withdrawing to the open seat next to where Bakugou had been washing.

"You could have just lied, you moron," scoffed Bakugou, a small smile present on his lips as he cautiously continued washing his body with his wound-free hand only. "I'll wash your hair next time. I don't like

owing favours to anyone. But you'll have to wait for my hand to heal, though."

"I feel conflicted between wanting your hand to stay bandaged so I have an excuse to wash you and wanting it to heal as fast as possible so you can wash me," confessed Todoroki, sideways glancing at Bakugou while he shampooed his hair.

"Pfft! What's with that?" laughed Bakugou, quickly turning the showerhead on to rinse both body and head one last time before he went to the tub. He could still feel his legs wobble around like gelatin, but he somehow managed to reach the large communal bath and get in without making a complete fool of himself. He sighed in relish at the warm water softly caressing the soreness away.

Some minutes later, Todoroki joined him in the bath, taking a seat right next to him.

"You haven't fallen asleep in the bath, right?" asked Todoroki, taking a quick peek at Bakugou's features. The way he was so quiet all of a sudden was slightly concerning but there wasn't much to say while relaxing in the bath, was there?

"I was thinking about that too earlier but the moment I got in here, my sleepiness was blown away faster than my blasts," confessed Bakugou, a serious frown on his features as he stared to no place in particular. He shrugged his shoulders, using the opportunity to change the position of the arm he was keeping outside of the bath. "I guess just being in the same room as you doesn't have any effect on me."

"I see," acknowledged Todoroki. The bathing area was filled with silence once again, only some droplets hitting the wet floor or the bath's water splashing on their bodies breaking it occasionally. The watery sound effects were strangely reminiscent of locations similar to

the dorm's bathing facilities and such thoughts made Todoroki perk up all of a sudden. "I want to go to a hot spring."

"Huh?" interjected Bakugou, an eyebrow slightly arched on his brows as he turned his head towards Todoroki. "Where did that one come from?"

"If we stayed at a ryokan, we would get to relax in even better baths than this one, our dinner or maybe lunch would be served directly in our room and I'd get to see you wearing a yukata," noted Todoroki, nodding his head a couple of times to acknowledge his own fantastical thoughts. He turned his focus on Bakugou, who was still staring at him with a quizzical look on his face. "What do you think?"

"I don't know if you remember or not but we're currently under fucking school arrest!" said Bakugou with a certain annoyance. It did sound like a very nice idea and he likewise acknowledged the appeal of seeing Todoroki wearing traditional Japanese clothes, but the fact they were currently undergoing a month-long punishment that prevented them from leaving school grounds made the thought of it akin to torture.

"Oh. I did forget about it," blurted out Todoroki, which caused Bakugou to face-palm himself and splash water all over the place. He tilted his head as he thought more closely about it. "We could go after the school festival or during winter break."

"Every time we go out together, shit happens. If we were to go to a hot spring, I'm dead sure we'd end up getting involved in another moronic Quirk incident," grumbled Bakugou, his fingers impatiently tapping on the bath's edge. Just remembering the disastrous visit to the hero exhibition and the teleportation incident during their first date, which ultimately resulted in the mentioned punishment, filled him with bottomless anger and frustration. He haughtily hmphed. "I'll think about it. But only if we can go out once without any stupid Quirk incident happening to either of us! One more failed date and I swear

I'm never going anywhere with you ever again!"

"Hm… Maybe we should invite someone-"

"I'll murder any third wheel that tries to breathe the same air as me," threateningly warned Bakugou, his frown tightening even more. He sighed. "Either way, we still have three weekends, three weeks and one annoying school festival to go through before we can step outside of the school grounds. We can think about going out on dates and trips then. How long are we gonna stay in the bath? I want a late-night dinner, not a super early breakfast. Hurry up and get out."

He's acting all shy once again, inwardly chuckled Todoroki, finding the way he had changed the subject to be so endearing. He shortened the distance between them and leaned forward, gently kissing the corner of Bakugou's lips. "I'm not that great at cooking."

"There's soba in the fridge, you just need to boil it," said Bakugou, his cheeks slightly puffed in a pout. Todoroki sometimes could read him like an open book, couldn't he? His body flinched in surprise slightly when Todoroki grabbed him and pulled him out of the water, easily carrying him against his chest to get out of the bath and the bathing area. His pout only grew more noteworthy on his features and it especially showed in the way he was pinching Todoroki's expressionless cheek. "Oh, so now that you know there's soba waiting for you, you're all fired up to get out of the bath, huh? Put me down!"

"This way it's quicker," pointed out Todoroki after having shaken Bakugou's hand away from his face. Once he caught Bakugou opening his mouth once again to complain at him, he readily struck first and silenced him with a kiss long enough to successfully arrive at the changing room without further resistance.

Needless to say, Todoroki was mercilessly slapped straight in the face

as soon as he put Bakugou down. He could call himself lucky that it was merely a slap and not a punch, or his soba would have later tasted like blood - Bakugou never had any qualms in physically demonstrating his displeasure or anger, but maybe Todoroki should start thinking twice before aggravating a shy koala even further.

Are koalas even that quick at resorting to violence? Rather than a koala or a snake, that was more like a moody cat striking back, inwardly sighed Todoroki as he glanced down at a pot filled with boiling water. Once there was enough bubbling action in the water's surface, he dropped the hand-made soba noodles in the pot and looked in the sofa's direction. "I just need to let them boil for a little bit and then immediately put them in the iced water, right?"

"Yeah…" mumbled Bakugou, quickly averting Todoroki's gaze by turning his face in the window's direction. Dark as it was in the central courtyard, there was little to see there in the middle of the night.

"Ouch, my face hurts," said Todoroki with a monotone voice, his words as expressionless as a block of stone. His blank gaze never parted from Bakugou as he gently massaged the place where he had been slapped.

"At least put some effort in faking it!!!" hissed Bakugou, accusingly pointing his index finger in Todoroki's direction. "And besides, it was all your fault! Who told you to pick me up like that!? You know I hate being carried and pitied and fuckin' looked after just because I can't walk all that well right now, which is also your damned fault in the first place!"

"I wonder if they're done already?" asked Todoroki to no one in particular, using the cooking chopsticks to grab a couple of noodles from the boiling water and observe them from closer.

“Don’t ignore me!!” roared Bakugou, sulkily punching his fist on the sofa’s backrest. “They need to be boiled for a couple more seconds! There’s still some dipping sauce in the fridge so just make do with that one for tonight! And don’t forget to bring the shichimi for me!”

Todoroki softly chuckled as he sideways glanced at Bakugou moodily turning on the TV, inaudibly grumbling to himself as he switched the channels in quick succession. Following Bakugou’s directions and instructions, Todoroki easily finished preparing two plates of cold soba, carrying them to the sofas with the requested dipping sauce and a small container of shichimi spice mixture. He left the sauce and spices on the table and offered one of the plates and a pair of chopsticks to Bakugou before sitting down next to him.

“The soba you were keeping in the fridge isn’t the spicy kind, right?” inquired Todoroki, just so he could brace his tongue and mouth for impact in the off-chance some of the ‘anti-theft’ noodles had slipped into the pot too.

“Taste it and you’ll know,” said Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. He sprinkled some of the shichimi on his dipping bowl and briefly mixed the sauce before he dipped some of the soba noodles in it. A mischievous smirk surfaced on his lips as he slurped and chewed the noodles. “Or are you afraid you won’t be able to take a little bit of heat?”

“I haven’t been desensitised to spicy food like you have,” deadpanned Todoroki, expressionlessly eyeing the smug smirk on his lover’s face. It was an all-or-nothing gamble but he still persisted forward and began his late-night dinner too. Luckily for him, he didn’t hit the ‘jackpot’ and the hand-made cold soba was as heavenly as usual. “You should teach me how to cook too.”

“What, jealous of the Spartan lessons those idiots had to go through throughout this week?” scoffed Bakugou, slowly munching on the noodles as he stared at the TV screen - there wasn’t anything

particularly interesting in any channel, just plenty of late-night series and talk shows, but it wasn't that bad to have the entire communal living room area to themselves.

"That's one of the reasons, yeah, but you're also always the one doing the cooking for the two of us," explained Todoroki, his eyes also stuck on the TV screen as he chugged down the deliciousness. "It makes me really happy when you cook for me. So I end up wondering if you also don't want someone to cook for you now and then."

"I don't. Just stay useless and eat the food I cook," grumbled Bakugou, switching to another channel once again as a distraction. Todoroki's dense, straightforward honesty was acting up again and there was little around them at the moment that could rescue him from it. He couldn't exactly slap the living daylights out of Todoroki for the second time in less than an hour. "I'm still in the process of modifying your digestive system into something that can't survive without my food. Stop trying to get in my way, you idiot."

"So that means we'll have to continue living together after graduation and work for hero agencies closeby to one another, or we'll constantly collapse from lack of sleep and starvation," noted Todoroki, leisurely dipping his soba noodles in the sauce. "Speaking of which, have you already decided on the family register?"

"I seriously can't tell if you're joking or being serious right now…" groaned Bakugou, hurriedly stuffing more food in his mouth.

"Does it look like I'm joking?" pointed out Todoroki, head slightly tilted to the right as he analysed his own words more closely. They didn't particularly sound like something someone would say for laughs and giggles.

"S-Shut up and eat..." mumbled Bakugou, his head flopping sideways

on top of Todoroki's shoulder. He could feel his entire face sizzling at higher temperatures and with a brighter red than a metal-melting furnace.

"You're so cute, Bakugou."

"Stop calling me 'cute', damn it!"

Chapter 40

W-What am I supposed to do about this…!?, inwardly screeched Kouda, his mouth opening and closing like a fish out of water as he released a silent scream.

Kouda's disastrous morning started 15 minutes ago, right after he exited the elevator on the ground floor to find the TV already turned on. He initially had thought that one of his classmates had already woken up and was enjoying their breakfast, but when he walked closer to the kitchen area, there was no one to be found in the dining tables. As such, he concluded that someone had forgotten to turn off the TV last night. When he went to look for the remote control… he discovered more than he probably should have.

Why are Todoroki and Bakugou sleeping here?, asked Kouda in the back of his mind, nervously staring at his two fast-asleep classmates laid down cuddled against one another on the sofa. Or to be more precise, Bakugou was all curled up against Todoroki's body, his face almost completely buried on his chest. In a state of full-blown panic, Kouda was left at a complete lack of what to do as minutes continued to tick by and neither of them showed any signs of waking up any time soon.

"Yeah, but the results actually ended up being better than what I was expecting," commented a voice from further away from the living room area. Kouda immediately turned his head in the approaching cheerful voices and spotted Jirou, Yaoyorozu, Uraraka and Asui talking with each other. He nervously waved his hands at them, trying to get their attention without making any noise. Luckily, Jirou seemed to have noticed him pretty quickly. "Kouda? What's the-"

"Shhh!" instructed Kouda, his index finger pressed tight against his lips as he requested for silent cooperation. He then pointed a couple of times at the sofa and the current problem peacefully sleeping on it.

"Huh?" interjected the four girls in unison, Uraraka and Asui exchanging a quick questioning glance with one another. Once they finally reached Kouda's location, four more people entered 'silent panicking mode'.

"W-Why are they sleeping there?" whispered Yaoyorozu, her eyes continuously jumping from the sofa to her awake classmates. Kouda furiously shook his head, sharing with them that he was just as confused as the girls were.

"Cute…" mumbled Asui, her face maintaining the same calm demeanour of always as she walked slightly closer to the sofa to peek at the sleeping couple.

"I-I shouldn't be doing this… But I can't resist the temptation…" softly yelped Uraraka with a stuttering voice, one of her hands bashfully covering her face while the other opened her flip phone and pressed the camera's shortcut button. Maybe she had been dyed by Midoriya's colours more than she herself realised. "This needs to be recorded properly… or everyone will think we're crazy."

"I'm actually doubting if I'm really awake or not right now," whispered Jirou, bashfully glancing in the sofa's direction from next to Yaoyorozu. "What do you think we should do, Yaomomo?"

"W-Well, I believe the best course of action would be to wake them up but…" said Yaoyorozu with a small voice, only audible to those in close quarters. "I fear Bakugou-san will blow up with the dorm shortly after we do that."

He definitely will, inwardly cringed Jirou, Uraraka, Asui and Kouda, the latter visibly shuddering at the thought alone.

"Maybe we should return to our rooms and stay there for a while longer until they wake up on their own," suggested Jirou, pointing with her thumb to the path she had taken with the other girls to arrive at the communal area.

"But that won't stop the noisier and louder boys from suddenly dropping by to have breakfast and wake up Bakugou-chan and Todoroki-chan in the worst way possible," pointed out Asui, sideways glancing in the elevator's direction as if it was the door to incoming doom, maybe even the apocalypse itself.

"Oh, I can send them a group message to warn them to stay far away from the living room for a while," said Uraraka, opening her flip phone once again and quickly typing a short message to the remaining class 1-A's students (minus the two sleeping boys, obviously. Who knew if they didn't have their cell phones in their pocket or something?). "And sent~ The dorm is now safe and sound once again!"

Five seconds after Uraraka announced the end of their problems with a huge grin on her bubbly face, a low rumbling started being heard coming from the stairs on the male side of the building.

"K-Kacchan… Haa! And Todoroki-kun… Haa, haa!" gasped Midoriya, panting his lungs out after having departed from his bedroom and gone down two lances of stairs at the speed of light. The lack of oxygen didn't stop him from zooming in to the sofa faster than any of the flabbergasted onlookers could mouth a 'what the hell?' A blissed-out expression flourished on his features, his green eyes sparkling in excitement as he covered his mouth with both hands and muttered, "I need to write this down. Argh, but I forgot my notebook upstairs. I'll just write it down on my phone, no, better yet, I'll take some photos, no, no, wait, a video!"

"D-Deku-kun, calm down or Bakugou-kun will slaughter you before blowing up with the dorm!" yelped Uraraka with a hushed voice,

hurriedly dragging Midoriya away from the sofa before he woke up a sleeping beast - in the most literal of senses. She vehemently continued admonishing him. "Didn't I warn you and everyone else to stay away from the living room for a while? Why would you come running as soon as you opened the message?"

"I-I mean, it's Kacchan we're talking about here so seeing is believing, I guess... I just couldn't help myself..." whispered back Midoriya, awkwardly scratching the back of his head as he averted looking directly at Uraraka and her puffed out pouting cheeks. He had seen Bakugou fast asleep countless times already, thanks to their long background history of attending the same school and class since their kindergarten days, but it had never been under this type of circumstances. Once he read Uraraka's warning message and saw the attached photo, his body moved before his brain could stop him from running at full speed to his own possible demise.

“You still should know better than act this rashly,” added Uraraka, putting her hands on her hips. “You put yourself and everyone in the dorm in danger.”

“I… I’m sorry…” apologised Midoriya, his shoulders slumping down as he bowed down at Uraraka, for starters, and then at the rest of his classmates, who were still staring at him as if he had sprouted a second head on his neck.

Five seconds after Uraraka concluded her scolding with an acknowledging nod of her head, even more rumbling started teetering through the dorm, this time coming from both the stairs on the male side of the building and the corridor that connected the female side to the communal area.

“I wanna see it!!” yelped Kaminari with a small voice, rushing down the stairs with Kirishima and Sero right next to him. They nearly tripped over one another as they tried to reach the sofa as fast as they could without making an unnecessary amount of noise - something

they were clearly failing at.

“Kaminari, shush up, dude, you’re being too loud!” warned Kirishima, his voice just as noisy as Kaminari’s squeal of excitement had been.

“Where are they!? Which sofa is it!? Are they still cuddling!?” squeaked Ashido with a whispering voice, also rushing towards the communal living room area with Hagakure in tow. “Are we too late!?”

“I’m starting to question the inborn survival instincts in the next generation of heroes,” said Asui, her head tilted to the left as she observed a small crowd rounding up the sofa and the two (still) sleeping students laid down on it.

“What the hell is this…?” whispered Sero, his eyes nearly jumping out of their sockets. He found the photo Uraraka sent them to be a little bit hard to believe so he had come to investigate the matter further personally. But he wasn’t counting on seriously finding Bakugou and Todoroki cuddling so openly in a public space. The photo didn’t do any justice to the live show. “Like, this is so… They’re too…”

“Cute~” breathed out the students in nearly perfect synchrony, a relaxing and harmonious feeling assaulting their cores, right until it shot through their hearts.

“I… I need more photos of them…” muttered Midoriya, lifting his cell phone once again with the camera app on. “A chance like this doesn’t come twice in a single lifetime…”

“Midoriya, don’t,” warned Kirishima with a hushed tone, his head frantically shaking in denial. He was also trying to control the intense urge to snap a couple of photos himself so he could perfectly relate with how Midoriya was feeling at the moment - but some cute photos

weren't worth the risk of having their limbs ripped and turned into pulp one by one. "Just take as many mental photos as possible."

"I know you're strong enough to resist your stalker tendencies," encouraged Kaminari, his hands clenched tight in fists as he nodded his head in absolute certainty. "You can do it! I believe in you!"

"B-But…" stammered Midoriya, his finger steadily growing closer to the phone's screen and the round button in its lower half.

"...nngh… why so damn noisy already…?" mumbled Bakugou with a small groan. His half-asleep features scrunched up into a frown as he sluggishly nuzzled them against Todoroki's warm chest. He rolled his body slightly against the sofa's cushions and used his arms to push his upper body into a half-sat down position. His frown only got even more intense when he noticed the sea of people surrounding him. Bakugou hissed, " *Huh?* "

We're done for!!!!, yelped the students, their bodies frozen in place and faces becoming ghastly pale. *We are so done for!!*

"Tsk, we fell asleep here…?" grumbled Bakugou with an annoyed click of his tongue. He dropped the palm of his hand on top of Todoroki's sleeping face, readily startling him into a half-awake, half-asleep state. "Hey, Todoroki. Wake up."

"Huh…? We fell asleep on the sofa…?" mumbled Todoroki, sluggishly rubbing his sleepy eyes as he lifelessly sat up on the sofa. He could remember them finishing eating their late-night dinner and staying in the communal living room area for a while longer after he cleaned the dirty dishes, but he couldn't recall when was it that they had fallen asleep there. He turned his head to their classmates and nonchalantly said, "Good morning."

This… wasn't the reaction we were expecting…, inwardly noted the students, small sighs of relief escaping from in between their lips afterwards.

"What time is it…?" grumbled Bakugou, groping his pants' pockets for his cell phone. When he couldn't find the electronic device anywhere, he clicked his tongue yet again. He menacingly started getting up from the sofa, threateningly hissing like a raging dragon at the small crowd surrounding them. "Move it, idiots!"

Oh, they moved alright. They readily took several steps backwards, opening a path for his royal highness Bakugou-sama to fall face-first on the floor the moment his feet touched the ground.

"....."

The whole communal area was dead silent, only the happy chirping of the birds outside mocking the tense atmosphere inside of the dorm.

".....bad sleeping posture really can fuck you up good....." said Bakugou, slamming his fist on the floor as he pushed his upper body away from the ground and that embarrassing position.

"Pffft!" snorted Todoroki, covering his laughter with his hand while he continued glancing at Bakugou from the sofa.

"Seriously, stop laughing already!!!!!" roared Bakugou, angrily whipping his head around so he could glare daggers at Todoroki. "I'll fuckin' kill you!!! Die, you jerk!!!"

'Bad sleeping posture'..., inwardly noted the students, their faces expressionlessly taking in the bickering interaction between Bakugou and Todoroki - or better yet, Bakugou verbally attacking Todoroki from a distance since he couldn't even crawl back to the sofa on his own. *They totally did it last night…!*

Told you so, added Midoriya and Kirishima in the back of their minds, physically fighting back the urge to facepalm themselves. Todoroki sure had been fast at giving good use to the cursed items in the shopping lists… Perhaps too much of a good use.

"W-Well, shall we all have breakfast now?" suggested Yaoyorozu, an awkward smile on her lips as she tried to dispel the weird ambience in the communal area. She started walking towards the kitchen while adding, "I was thinking about preparing some Darjeeling tea today. Would anyone like a cup too?"

"Y-Yeah, I'll have a cup, please," acknowledged Jirou, following right after Yaoyorozu with shy Kouda and energetic Ashido and Hagakure.

"Has anyone put the rice cooking?" inquired Sero, also departing from the sofa's proximity to get his breakfast done. Since he was already out and about in the communal area, he might as well eat now.

"I-I'll go check it!" offered Midoriya, readily running towards the kitchen to go take a peek at the rice cooker. Uraraka and Asui soon followed right after him.

"Do ya need a hand, Bakugou?" asked Kirishima, slowly crouching down in front of Bakugou while averting looking directly at him.

"Piss off!" hissed Bakugou, slapping Kirishima's hand away while sitting up on the floor. "I don't need anyone's help! Go away, you

spiky-haired punk!”

“Yes, yes,” laughed Kirishima, rolling his eyes around at Bakugou’s prideful refusals. He got up once again and walked towards the kitchen area with Kaminari, both beginning the usual breakfast preparation procedures of every morning. When Kirishima spotted the small pile of containers filled with sweet treats - some utter failures, others good first attempts - by the corner of the counter, he once again turned his attention to Bakugou. “Oh, by the way! Yesterday’s cookout was-”

Kirishima ended up cutting off his words short, however. Bakugou seemed far too preoccupied trying to fence off Todoroki’s offers of help to pay him any attention. A fight that was quickly concluded, as Todoroki’s persistence eventually paid off and he got Bakugou back on the sofa (though not without taking a couple of hits throughout the transfer process).

“They’re really amusing to look at, aren’t they?” said Asui, catching Kirishima totally by surprise. She softly chuckled at her classmate, a small wink hinting that she had been observing the couple’s antics just like Kirishima was. “I once read that it’s the small, unconscious actions that show how a person truly feels. Bakugou-chan is a textbook example of that.”

“Hmm… You think so?” wondered Kirishima, crossing his arms over his chest as he observed both of his friends even more closely. If he had had binoculars with him, he would have been using them by now. Because, truth be told, all he could see was Bakugou passive-aggressively retorting back at Todoroki, who was the perfect personification of ‘I don’t give a damn’ as he expressionlessly listened to the endless barking. It was the same nearly theatrical interaction of always and something that occurred with many others, not just between themselves. However…

Oh?, inwardly interjected Kirishima, an eyebrow getting slightly

arched as he spotted Bakugou's frowning features relaxing considerably the moment he forced Todoroki to act as a substitute pillow while he leaned his back on the right side of his body and snatched his cell phone away. Shortly after, Bakugou dropped the back of his head on top of Todoroki's shoulder, calling for his attention. Whatever it was that Bakugou had shown Todoroki through his cell phone, it caused Todoroki's facial expression to break into an even blanker demeanour and Bakugou to start laughing his ass off. Todoroki got up from the sofa and started walking towards the elevator with a seemingly sulking expression but Bakugou remained on the sofa. Quietly looking at Todoroki as he walked away. He was simply looking. But that alone made Kirishima understand what Asui had just told him. *OHHHHHHHH!?*

"Bakugou, are you also going to eat breakfast now or are you planning on letting Todoroki spoil you with his unknown cooking skills?" loudly asked Sero, breaking Bakugou out of his tender spell.

"Nah, I'm eating now," said Bakugou, leisurely stretching his arms and back while sitting down. He then finally got up from the sofa, almost as if the previous falling incident had never happened.

"Oh, so you can still walk," noted Kaminari, taking a big bite out of one of the slices of toast he had just finished making while walking to the closest dining table. "I thought Todoroki had completely wrecked your ass. Good for you."

Kaminari (and everyone else present in the communal area) learned that day that Bakugou was more than able to beat the shit out of anyone even with a sore backside.

Chapter 41

"So? What do you think?" asked Satou, his Adam's apple bobbing out considerably as he nervously swallowed in dry. The other members of the kitchen team were just a couple of steps behind him, nearly biting their nails into dust as they awaited the final verdict.

The school festival was just three days away. The kitchen and backstage team had continuously worked hard after their regular classes to master all of the items in the menu created by Bakugou, at the same time they built all the necessary contraptions and scenic visuals that would turn their classroom into something reminiscent of a fantastical fairy tale picture book.

They had successfully finished all of the backstage constructions since earlier that week. A fake wall would separate the tables from the kitchen area, they had made arrangements with Lunch Rush to have a portable stove and oven in the classroom and they also made up some space in the canteen's fridges for any food items that needed to be refrigerated before preparation or serving. Jirou created a playlist for BGM, some of which was from her own creation, and she had been working closely with the serving team to create visual cues and know when they were about to play one of their small skits, changing the background music to create the appropriate ambience at those times. As for the café area itself, it had been decorated with different fantasy scenery archetypes, each one purposely made to fit in with the characters in charge of waiting on that table.

Given that they only had a month to create all of that during their after-class hours, the results were nothing but perfection.

Now the last and biggest hurdle they had to go through was getting the head chef's seal of approval. In other words, they needed to make Bakugou say the food they had prepared was good.

"..." Bakugou slowly put a piece of the apple pie's slice in his mouth and chewed on it with no signs of interest in it whatsoever. The same silent reaction he had had to the other menu items, whether sweet or savoury. He finished the slice with a gulp of one of the tea brands they'd be serving with the sweets. He sighed as he crossed his arms over his chest and leaned back on the chair. "Well, I bet there's dog food that tastes worse than this. I doubt any of the customers, if we actually have any, will complain about these. So yeah, whatever, you pass, I guess."

"HELL YEAH, WE DID IT!!!" cheerfully celebrated the kitchen and backstage team, Kirishima and Kaminari high-fiving each other and Satou loudly roaring his success with a glorious fist pump.

"Man, I'm so glad you liked them," sighed Kirishima in relief, taking a seat on the same dining table as Bakugou and taking one of the menchi katsu sandwiches for himself. He took a big bite off of it and continued talking while chewing. "I wa' 'tarting to wonder what to do if ya sai' they taste like crap or somethin'."

"I was the one who created the menu and attached a buttload of instructions to the recipes so of course they taste good," pointed out Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. He leisurely put one more slice of the apple pie on his plate and stabbed his fork right in the middle of it. He menacingly growled, "I'd have reeducated you from scratch if you had fucked up any of the menu items with your crappy cooking skills."

Satou, you're a life saviour, inwardly thanked the entire kitchen and backstage team, Kaminari even going as far as to shed some tears. If Bakugou's Spartan 101 cooking classes had been hell, they couldn't - they didn't want to imagine what supplementary cooking classes would be like. They would surely make the ones some of them took during the training camp seem like just another late-night studying session.

"Now we only need to wait for the serving team to finish their preparations," said Tokoyami, also serving himself a slice of the delicious (as far as he was concerned) apple pie.

"I think they finally finished making their outfits today," informed Jirou, also taking a seat on the dining table to indulge on some of the sweet treats. "Yaomomo said they were having a hard time with Iida's outfit but that if things went according to plan, they'd be able to parade around the dorm with them this evening."

"And our great Holy Knight was most certainly correct!" suddenly said someone with an extremely overdramatic voice. The front door of the dorm was suddenly slammed open, revealing Ashido in clothes far different from the usual school uniform. Her body was clothed with pink animal pattern fabric and hard leather, with her legs covered right until her tights with long boots and hands dressed with a pair of light brown leather gloves decorated in fluffy white fur. "We have all taken up our arms and joined to undergo a 100-years quest through these dangerous lands we call home!"

"Oh my god, Mina, you look amazing!" squeaked Hagakure, her seemingly empty clothes floating at the speed of light towards her friend. "You said you were a warrior of some sort, right?"

"I'm Tsuyu-chan's bodyguard," proudly announced Ashido, tapping with her fist on her chest while saluting to a certain degree. She then peered outside the open door, in the same direction of the remainder of the serving team. She then had a brilliant idea. "Oh, I know! How about you guys try to guess what characters we are and our background stories? We'll go in one by one. Wait a bit!"

Before anyone could give their consent to the last-minute charade game, Ashido disappeared through the front door once again. Minutes later, she was back together with Asui.

"You already know I'm Tsuyu-chan's bodyguard but who is Tsuyu-chan~?" inquired Ashido, gesturing sideways towards Asui. She was dressed in a colourful dress, the corset dark green and white blouse underneath, the skirt of striped red and white. She had a likewise dark green apron over the skirt and a leather belt on her hips.

"Wow, Tsuyu-chan, you're rocking that outfit!" said Kaminari, his excitement levels escalating even more as he gave her classmates his thumbs-up of approval. "Are you perhaps an innkeeper!?"

"That's right," acknowledged Asui with a soft smile. She picked up the side of her skirt with the tips of her fingers and curtsied to their first audience. "I run a small inn deep in the forest, where both adventurers and other fantastical beings are always welcome. Not bandits, however, hence Mina-chan's employment in my establishment."

"Next team, then~" announced Ashido with a thumbs-up. She gestured towards the door, urging her classmates to come in.

"This is so damn stupid…" grumbled Bakugou under his breath, half turning his body around from the door so he wouldn't have to damage his eyes with that annoying charade. He wanted to finish his second slice of apple pie as fast as possible before his eyes went completely bad - but it seemed he was far too late already. The chunk of sugary sweet apple and crumbly pie base got stuck on his throat from shock but getting breathless had nothing to do with it. "Ack! Cough, cough…!"

"Ohh, take a look at these two hunks~" whistled Kaminari, also taking a large bite at a menchi katsu sandwich. "I can see that Todoroki is supposed to be some sort of royalty but what about you, Sero?"

"I'm the prince's attendant," sighed Sero, his brain once again experiencing a sports festival's flashback. How he ended up getting in

a position below Todoroki, even if figuratively speaking only, for the second time in a school activity, he had no idea… but, apparently, the casual attendant look suited him so what could he do?

"I'm the prince. For some reason," expressionlessly said Todoroki, gesturing his index finger towards himself. He lightly adjusted the turtleneck of the blue and golden coat and sighed. "I should have paid more attention when we were talking about character roles."

The girls sure are serious about capitalising Todoroki, inwardly cringed the male side of the kitchen and backstage team, cautiously observing the eerie grin in Ashido's face (and possibly Hagakure too, since they could only sense the same dubious intentions coming from her rather than see them). With Todoroki alone, they could already predict a hefty amount of customers so, making the sums, maybe they should double their kitchen supplies… just to play safe.

"You think it doesn't suit me?" inquired Todoroki, his head tilting slightly as he noticed the pitying look in his classmates' faces while gawking at him.

"T-That's not exactly it…" hesitantly said Ojiro, trying to find a way to break the news to Todoroki - it seemed he still hadn't fully realised that the girls had taken him for a spin to gain more customers and profits throughout the school festival. A warning glance from the female population in the communal area quickly made him change his mind. "Um, never mind. You look good, don't worry about it."

"Bakugou?" called Todoroki, switching his mismatched gaze slightly to the side to focus it solely on Bakugou's quivering back. "What do you think?"

"A… Absolutely horrible!" hissed Bakugou all of a sudden, almost as if something had broken inside of him. Probably his restraint. And the

limit amount of blood pumping in his head. Maybe in some other parts of his body too but fuck that shit, he was so out of there now! He got up from his seat as if a cannonball, readily turning around on his heels to rush towards the stairs with his sizzling features as lowered as possible. "That's the worst outfit of them all so far. It's awful. Disgusting. Die. Hurry up and take that damned thing off. And then die again. Burn it with your Quirk until it ceases to exist and then die one more time, you fuckin' idiot…!!!"

As quickly and suddenly as the storm started, it went away through the stairs just as fast, leaving behind the wreckage of a broken-hearted 'prince' and several gaping mouths.

“Knowing Bakugou, I think you should take that just now as a ‘you look good’,” said Kirishima in an attempt to cheer up Todoroki and his motionless depressed stance in the middle of the entrance area. “So don’t go all corpse on us again, ‘kay?”

“Kacchan totally lost his cool there…” awkwardly chuckled Midoriya from the entranceway, his hands lightly adjusting the leather strap of the bag he employed together with his adventurer’s outfit. “Don’t take it to heart, Todoroki-kun. It’s just Kacchan being Kacchan.”

“If that was Bakugou-kun’s reaction to Todoroki-kun, then we’re about to become the most popular food booth throughout the entire school festival,” noted Uraraka as she also peeked into the communal area through the open door. Her hands briefly tightened their grip around the wood staff that came alongside her sorcerer’s character role before she gave a victorious thumbs up to Ashido. “Our plan is a success.”

“But you don’t think maybe we have gone a bit too far?” inquired Yaoyorozu, stepping inside of the dorm while clad in (very little) armour plates. She thought more closely and evaluated their side-scheme once again. “Too much popularity can get us in trouble too.”

“We have a limited amount of space and tables so we can’t serve more than twenty customers at the same time,” said Iida, his voice slightly muffled and metallic due to being covered from head to toes in a knight’s armour. “I’m sure the kitchen will be able to handle that. Especially with Bakugou-kun around.”

“We have moi~ too so I’ll steal everyone’s attention with my charm and sparkle if worst comes to worst,” announced Aoyama, snobbishly winking his eye at his classmates. He flicked the red cape raining down from his shoulders. “There is no one brighter than a holy knight like me, after all. Not even the prince himself!”

“Alright! Since there are menu items around, how about we practice our serving skills on the kitchen and backstage members?” suggested Ashido, cheerfully waltzing closer to the dining table where the food evaluation had been happening.

“Ohh~ Me likes that idea~” said Mineta, drool overflowing from his smirking mouth as he ogled at the girls’ skimpy outfits. It took Asui half a second to subdue him back in place with a strong slap of her frog-like tongue.

It took more than a few minutes for Todoroki to bounce back to his usual self, however, even with Kirishima’s and Midoriya’s reassuring words that it was just Bakugou acting shy about his outfit. Bakugou himself also didn’t help with the matter, especially with his characteristic lack of communication with the important stuff.

Despite eating breakfast and dinner every day and ransacking his futon to get some sleep every night, Bakugou continued to actively avoid Todoroki with the excuse ‘I’m too busy, bye’ until the day the school festival finally began.

Chapter 42

"I was feeling nervous at first but now that things started rolling, I'm super pumped!" confessed Kaminari with an excited grin on his lips as he took a small peek into the table area. The school festival had started an hour ago and some of their tables had already been occupied by visitors curious to have a late breakfast in a fantasy-themed café booth. He softly closed the curtain once again and turned to the rest of the kitchen and backstage team. "I'm so glad we didn't have a buttload of customers rushing in at the same time."

"C'mon, you're overestimating our popularity," laughed Kirishima, strongly slapping Kaminari's back. "With so much to see and eat around the school festival, there's no way we'd get fully booked in such a short time. It's not even lunchtime yet. Let's take it easy for now and then seriously start pushing those orders out once lunch rush starts."

"Kirishima's right," acknowledged Satou with a small nod of his head, his hands busy brewing some tea for the last order they received from the serving team. "People aren't interested in the food stalls and booths this early in the morning. The real challenge will begin closer to lunch hours. Especially if Yaoyorozu's and Aoyama's advertising through the school grounds catches the interest of the visitors."

"There's no way any man that calls himself a man can resist Yaomomo's bouncy rack," pointed out Mineta, wiping the leaking drool from the corner of his smirking lips with the back of his hand. A creepy laugh found its way out of his throat. "I can assure you of that, hihihihi…"

Everyone just rolled their eyes around at Mineta and his perversions, proceeding with their conversation as if his voice was nothing more than background noise to the soothing ambience music Jirou was currently putting out through the sound system cleverly hidden behind the table area's decorations.

"If I had to name one miscalculation of ours up until now, it would be that," said Tokoyami, his back leaning on one of the classroom's doors that was dubbing as staff only entrance to the kitchen portion of class 1-A's café booth.

That, huh…, inwardly sighed the kitchen and backstage team, Kirishima actually releasing an awkward laugh while he turned his gaze to the murderous presence haunting one of the corners of the kitchen area.

"Die, die, die, die, Todoroki, you stupid cheater, die, die, die, die…" grudgingly mumbled Bakugou under his breath as he impatiently remained sat down next to a small window meant to pass on small items to the serving team whenever requested. His sitting position made him fully invisible from the table's area but the small window on the fake wall enabled him a nearly open view of everything that went around between the waiters and the customers. "They picked your role for you, my ass… You just want an excuse to flirt around with those ugly extra characters… Die, you disgusting vixens… The Prince Charming you're trying to chat up is owned by someone already… So back off and go take a hike to the nearest trash can, you bunch of bimbos… Oh wait, I forgot that trash doesn't walk itself out, someone needs to throw it away… But none of my useless, stupid, dumb classmates will clear the trash, as usual… They should all die too… This is their fault in the first place, so take responsibility for it with your useless lives… Die, die, die, die…"

"Bakugou, how about you take a nice cup of tea and try to chill out a bit…?" suggested Kirishima, placing the requested teacups by the window and offering an extra one prepared by Satou to the demonic overlord supervising the tables rather than the kitchen. "At this rate, your blood pressure is gonna spike and wreck your mood even more."

"You're also in the death row's list so fuck off," hissed Bakugou, brusquely taking the tea from Kirishima's hands nevertheless. He could care less that the beverage was piping hot, he downed it in one

go and then nearly cracked the cup while slamming it down against Kirishima's hardened palm (it was that or a broken hand so Kirishima had to think fast on that one).

"Geez, you're being too unreasonable and overdramatic," sighed Kirishima with a roll of his eyes. "Todoroki's just talking with our customers like all of them are. Like *any* person would. And besides, he doesn't look like the type that cheats. He's just making small talk with them when needed and according to Yaomomo's scripted lines. Why don't you think of that prince over there as a completely separate entity from Todoroki? Like an actor playing a character in a TV drama or movie or something along those lines."

"I know that!" growled Bakugou, forcing himself to rip his burning gaze from the table area and look straight into Kirishima's eyes. "But those thots over there sure don't seem to share the same sentiment. His tables have become a kid-friendly version of a fuckin' host club! They're competing to see who gets more of the stupidly dense prince's attention and the damned idiot is going along with it…!! They should all just die! Everyone in this stupid school festival should just die…!"

"It's no use, he has snapped completely already," said Kirishima after turning back to the rest of his team, his head slowly shaking in denial. Even his close friendship with Bakugou couldn't stop the explosive blonde from going off at anything that may or may not happen in the tables assigned to Todoroki and Sero.

"I never thought Bakugou to be the jealous type," noted Jirou, lifting her eyes from the screen of the laptop she was using to DJ the café's BGM. She slightly tilted her head while crossing her arms over her chest. "No, wait. It does suit his personality. Maybe it's because the other person is Todoroki and they used to be going at each other' s throats all the time before they started dating?"

"I ain't jealous!" barked back Bakugou, accusingly pointing his index finger through the small window and into the target tables. "Those

ugly bitches are just pissing me off!"

You're the only bitching one in this classroom, they all inwardly cringed, some of them releasing tired sighs but still proceeding with their working functions as usual. No matter what they said, they'd only fuel Bakugou's jealous rage even further so the best approach would be to not approach him at all. Apart from grudgingly mumbling to himself and murderously glare daggers at any customer that sat down on those tables, he wasn't causing any trouble so let raging demon overlords rage, as one could say.

Damm it, if I knew this was going to happen, I would have found another way of getting myself rid of bothersome chores during the school festival while brainwashing those idiots into slaves, grumbled Bakugou on the back of his head, his teeth grinding in frustration.

Bakugou didn’t actually think that Todoroki was going to cheat on him and neither did he believe that Todoroki had it in him to flirt with the customers that sat on his assigned tables when he was already dating someone else. So he didn’t need Kirishima or any other person to reassure him of anything. He couldn’t even say he was feeling jealous at the moment as that would indicate that he had absolutely no confidence in himself or his boyfriend. He wasn’t childish to the point of getting jealous over some small talk between customer and service industry worker.

However, what pissed him off… still royally pissed him off.

What was the source of all of that irritation, Bakugou couldn’t quite tell. All he knew was that he was sick and tired of watching Todoroki flaunt around the tables with that getup.

I already hate school festivals as it is but this only makes me hate them even more, inwardly grumbled Bakugou, his foot impatiently tapping

on the floor as he sideways peeked through the small window once again. He clicked his tongue in annoyance and got up from the chair as the small group of girls leaving one of Todoroki's tables took their sweet time bidding their farewells to the prince (his brain automatically eliminated all of his classmates also involved in the conversation, for some reason).

"Bakugou?" called Kirishima, spotting his friend about to open the classroom's door as he was giving Uraraka the menu items requested on her tables.

"I'm taking a break," grumbled Bakugou, sliding the door open with a certain annoyance.

"Don't do anything even more overdramatic out there just because you're in a bad mood, okay?" advised Kirishima, an eyebrow arched as he observed Bakugou leaving the classroom. He repeated himself one more time, just to play safe. "Okay?"

"Hmph!" Bakugou only slammed the door shut behind himself, stuffing his hands on his school uniform's pockets as he sourly navigated through the bustling and energetic crowd walking all over the corridor.

You think this is being overdramatic? I'll give you true overdramatic!

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"Two more apple pie sets," requested Todoroki, popping his head through the curtain to talk with the kitchen team.

"We're on it," acknowledged Satou, readily getting his hands down to business. He let Kouda prepare the tea (recommended by Yaoyorozu) that went together with the slices of apple pie he was cutting. Only a little bit of the pie was left by now. "Hm… Maybe we should start baking more of these or we'll run out before lunchtime."

"Want me to get the stuff from the kitchen while I'm on my way to wash these?" inquired Kaminari, holding a plastic container filled with used plates, glasses and teacups.

"Yeah, if you don't mind," acknowledged Satou with a small nod of his head. After he neatly arranged the two apple pie sets on a tray, he passed them over to Todoroki. "Here you go."

"Where's Bakugou?" inquired Todoroki as he accepted the tray with an acknowledging nod. He couldn't see Bakugou around in the separate kitchen area but he also doubted he was helping out with dishwashing or baking. He had been extremely clear about that when he finished creating the café booth's menu.

"He went outside for a small break," said Satou with a tired sigh. "Hopefully to cool down and not to pick a fight somewhere else…"

"I see," acknowledged Todoroki with a deadpan expression. Their classmates truly had absolutely no trust in Bakugou when he was in a foul mood - even though he had never done anything rash when raging around through the dorm or school grounds. He carried the tray together with him back to the table assigned to the prince character and the prince's attendant, where Sero was currently entertaining the customers by doing an interactive skit with Asui and Ashido from the tables next to theirs. The customers were going along with the conversation with so much excitement and enthusiasm that they barely noticed when Todoroki placed their requested menu items in front of them.

I also want to go on a break with Bakugou, inwardly sighed Todoroki, quietly retreating back to the chair dubbed as 'throne' to wait for Sero's skit to be done. He couldn't say he disliked participating in the school festival in this way, but knowing that Bakugou was having fun on his own somewhere else put a damper on it. *I also want to walk around the school festival with him…*

"Um, Prince, what has gotten you so melancholic all of a sudden?" inquired one of the girls sat down on the table. "Come join us at our table if you're feeling lonely on your throne. We'll share some of our apple pie with you!"

"We're not meant to eat the customers' food," pointed out Todoroki, straightening his sitting position slightly and attempting to cheer himself up a bit. He just needed to hold on a bit more until Yaoyorozu and Aoyama returned from advertising their booth through the school grounds. Once they did, he could maybe change places with them and walk around the school festival with Bakugou with that as an excuse. He inwardly released a sigh and went along with the character setting that Yaoyorozu wrote down for him. He put a smile on his face and added, "It would be unbefitting of a Prince to steal from his beloved subjects."

"T-Then how about we order some for you too?" suggested the other girl, her cheekbones bright red at being called 'beloved' by such a hottie. "It would be our tribute to the Prince and his royal kingdom."

Not again, inwardly cringed Sero, pushing back his urge to facepalm himself, not even roll his eyes at the girl's words. He had heard that suggestion so many times since the school festival started, Todoroki would have become a round-bellied royalty by now if they had said 'yes' to every single one of them. He softly cleared his throat and bowed gingerly at the two girls. "My apologies, my ladies, but our Prince already has some dining arrangements for later. He cannot indulge himself with your company and tributes, unfortunately, for he needs to keep the kingdom and its citizens first and foremost at all times. We hope your kind hearts can understand."

"It's a pity but understandable," sighed the girl, her friend also nodding her head in acknowledgement. "Will you be taking care of governing matters during lunchtime, Prince?"

"Yes," said Todoroki with a small nod. With that question, certain thoughts popped out on his head. Perhaps that was the solution to be able to retreat from the serving functions for a while - the Prince was away to take care of some urgent matters regarding the kingdom. He wouldn't be breaking character, he wouldn't be slacking off since he could still promote their café booth and he could also-

Todoroki's train of thought was suddenly interrupted by a small commotion coming from the corridor. To keep the outside noise from disturbing Jirou's BGMs, they kept the classroom doors closed at all times and had two members of the backstage team regulate entrances and exits from the corridor. It also served as a way to control the number of customers inside, as they had a limited number of available tables and seats. So they couldn't quite see what was happening outside but they could clearly hear a fair share of girls going wild.

The classroom's door was suddenly slammed open and the unexpected barged in the dead silent table’s area.

"Eh…?" managed to croak Midoriya as an empty tray slipped out of his grasp and noisily clattered on the floor. Uraraka was covering her bright red face with her hands beside him, her mouth silently screaming in utter shock, something that was being shared by the majority of the customers and all of the serving team. Possibly even those inside of the kitchen area.

"If any of you peasants moves a single inch, I'll be executing you on the spot," warned the newcomer, his boots heavily echoing against the floor as he majestically marched inside of the classroom. Red mantle fluttering behind his half-naked torso, Bakugou jumped to on top of

one of Todoroki's and Sero's tables, with no regard whatsoever to the two girls sitting in it. A mischievous smirk on his lips, he announced to everyone in the classroom, "All of this land and everything in it is now mine! Any peasant who dares to cross my conquering path will be executed, any peasant that talks to my person will be executed. I don't care if there are complaints, I take care of what is mine in any way it pleases me the most. Are we clear?"

"K-Kacchan, what are you-" hesitantly inquired Midoriya, approaching the table being ransacked by the last person he ever expected to see wearing cosplay. Especially a cosplay like *that* . But his words were cut short by a boot's sole straight to his face.

"Did I perhaps stutter, peasant?" growled Bakugou, lightly pressing the sole of his boot on Midoriya's face to push him further and further away. He pulled his foot away from the flabbergasted adventurer and stomped it loudly on the table's surface, causing some of the customers to yelp in surprise. "Or are you seeking a painful, bloodied death by my hand?"
[Literal interpretation: “If you dare to get in my way, I'm gonna fuckin' kill you, Shitty Nerd.”]

"Ah… No…" babbled Midoriya, slowly, step by step, withdrawing back to near Uraraka and the completely flabbergasted Iida (though it was impossible to see his face underneath the full-body armour).

"Who are you and what do you want?" asked Sero, going along with Bakugou's unexpected participation(?) in their café booth. He protectively placed himself in front of the frozen-in-place Todoroki, as the attendant he was supposed to be.
[Literal interpretation: "What the hell are you doing here, Bakugou?"]

"Heh! I am a usurper," announced Bakugou, turning around on his heels slightly and jumping from the table to the supposed throne. He sat down on it as if he owned the seat and propped his elbow on the armrest, readily leaning his smug smirking face on his closed fist. "And

I now have nearly everything I want."
[Literal interpretation: "Shut it. I'll leave once I finish what I came to do here."]

"I thought you were no longer in this kingdom," pointed out Todoroki, an eyebrow slightly arched as he observed Bakugou and the enticing smirk on his lips. “Why did you come back?”
[Literal interpretation: “You were supposed to be on your break, Bakugou. Why are you here dressed like that?”]

“I came to claim what is mine by right,” said Bakugou, his free hand leisurely tapping the armrest of his newly acquired seat. His mischievous expression slowly morphed into a deep frown, his red eyes tightening into an intense glare. “Does the *former* prince perhaps have something to say against it?”
[Literal interpretation: “I’m sick of this stupid school festival so we’re out of here, Todoroki.”]

Ohhh, this is getting unexpectedly good for a simple cosplay café, inwardly squealed the customers, their eyes stuck on the sudden performance happening right before them. They gulped down in dry, all of them curious about the prince’s response to the sudden barbarian invasion.

“No, not really,” deadpanned Todoroki, giving a small shrug with his shoulders. “I was already expecting such to happen in its due time.”
[Literal interpretation: “I was just thinking about taking a break too and join you outside.”]

“Heh, is that so?” snorted Bakugou, leisurely getting up from the throne. He walked up to the prince and his protective attendant and hit the side of Sero’s torso with an elbow strike - he didn’t actually hit Sero, he just moved it close enough to urge him to move out of the way with some exaggerated acting to make it seem legit. Bakugou then leaned his demon-like evil expression closer to Todoroki’s blank demeanour. “Then I take it that you will also have nothing to say if I were to kill you right here, right now. This kingdom does not need

two rulers."

"We will not let you!!" loudly yelled another voice. The curtain that connected the kitchen area with the table's area was suddenly cut in half, easing the entrance of two knights into the skit. Both Yaoyorozu and Aoyama yielded their swords towards the threatening existence to their peaceful kingdom (in more than once sense). Yaoyorozu took a step towards and added, "We, of the Holy Knights, shall protect the royal family to our last breath. We will not allow a barbarian like you to steal our kingdom away!"

B-Bakugou-san, why are you suddenly doing something like this?, inwardly sobbed Yaoyorozu, forcing herself to pull as much attention as possible upon her to be able to put the plan forward. She had never thought that Bakugou would rope her and Aoyama into this sudden skit while they were outside advertising their café booth. But she couldn't quite refuse to participate in his scheme after seeing him dressed like that. After all, neither she nor any other member of the serving team had made a costume like that or added such character to the scripts. Which meant… Bakugou had come up with it all on his own behind everyone's backs.

"Hehe…" With everyone's attention stuck to the entrance of yet more new characters, Bakugou began the final act of that skit. He grabbed Todoroki and picked him up from the floor like a princess… um… prince(???), readily carrying him towards the same door he had used to invade the classroom. Todoroki was too busy deadpanning his incomprehension to do anything about it.

D-Did the usurper just sweep the prince off of his feet!?!?, inwardly yelped everyone inside of the classroom, mouths gaping wide open yet again.

"So long, suckers!!" taunted Bakugou, smugly looking over his shoulder at those being left behind. The door slowly slid shut behind him, thanks to Ojiro's and Shouji's cooperation.

It went without saying that the classroom's insides burst into a cacophony of squeals and screams as soon as both Bakugou and Todoroki were out of sight.

"Bakugou, what are you doing?" asked Todoroki, expressionlessly staring up to Bakugou's annoyed face.

"I'm asking myself the same thing…" grumbled Bakugou, averting Todoroki's gaze with zeel. He suddenly let go of his body, causing Todoroki to fall on the corridor's floor with all of gravity's weight riding on top of him. Their appearances and stances, together with the deafening noise coming from the classroom, were making them the centre of attention in that portion of the bustling corridor.

"Did you ask Yaoyorozu to make this for you?" asked once again Todoroki, lightly tugging the red mantle raining down from Bakugou's shoulders. He slowly picked himself up from the floor, his back slightly sore from the fall, and took a good, hard look at Bakugou's appearance. He tilted his head, his mismatched gaze tightening slightly as he recalled that there was no such design among the ones they all worked so much to finish on time. "Wait, is this the reason why you've been so busy these last couple of days? You were making this outfit?"

"So what? Got a problem with it!?" growled Bakugou, crossing his arms over his chest and turning his body slightly around so he could avert Todoroki's judging gaze even further. "You should be glad I opted for this rather than sabotage the entire school festival! Because I was this close to doing that!!"

"The only problem I have is that your outfit is too revealing," deadpanned Todoroki, adjusting the red mantle so it would cover more of Bakugou's half-naked upper body. "You're going to attract too much attention dressed like that and I don't like it."

“Y-Y-You…” stuttered Bakugou, his words stumbling all over the place as his face slowly turned bright pink. Friends or boyfriends, dislike or love, Todoroki truly was the most annoyingly dense human being Bakugou had the pleasure to meet. “YOU’RE THE LAST PERSON I WANT TO HEAR THAT FROM!!!!!”

Chapter 43

“So? What exactly are you plotting this time?” inquired Todoroki with a deadpan expression, a wooden advertising sign leisurely resting on his shoulder as he walked through the crowded outsides of the school building. “You’re not the type that goes out of his way to join the school festival out of the goodness of your heart. You even went through all of that work just so you wouldn’t have to do anything during the school festival itself.”

“Shut up with that already…” grumbled Bakugou, a pouting frown on his features as he walked next to Todoroki, carrying a similar advertising sign with him. "I already told you that it was this or sabotaging the school festival. This was what took less trouble to do so I went forward with it. There, the conversation's over. Let's hurry up with this stupid advertising round and get the hell out of here!"

"Even if we rush the advertising, we still need to return to the café booth afterwards," pointed out Todoroki, inwardly sighing at their poor luck. If the class had decided on something more simple, like a play or something along those lines, they'd be done as soon as they played out their show. No need to spend the whole school festival catering to customers and visitors. So he could partially share the same feelings as Bakugou, even though he had already resigned himself to the missed opportunity for a date.

"I fucking hate school festivals…!" cussed Bakugou, angrily clicking his tongue at it. He spotted a small group of students, all happily talking among themselves. If he couldn't enjoy himself outside, then all the extras around there also couldn't. He stomped his way to the group and nearly shoved the advertisement sign down one of the boy's throat as he threateningly said, "Class 1-A is doing a really *fun* café. Hurry up to our classroom before I teach you how to fly there with my explosions."

"Y-Y-YES…!!!" yelped the group of students with a startle, all of them

scurrying away in all directions but the correct one. Bakugou clicked his tongue in annoyance yet again.

"Bakugou, it's advertising, not scaring potential customers away," deadpanned Todoroki, his face completely void of expression as he fixedly stared at Bakugou.

"The fewer customers we have, the better my damned blood pressure will be!" hissed Bakugou, his previous bad mood returning in full just by remembering the host club-like ambience Todoroki's tables had gained as customers kept trickling in. "You want me to burst a freakin' vein while you're flirting around with those ugly harpies!?"

"I'm not flirting with the customers," said Todoroki, his head slightly tilted to the left. "I'm just reading the scripted lines and saying yes or no when they ask me something."

"I'm starting to think your 'yes or no' replies are the real problem here," groaned Bakugou, rolling his eyes around. Todoroki also said he gave those short, vague answers to their classmates after their relationship was revealed to everyone, and Bakugou knew how well that went for him - it didn't go well at all and only made their classmates nag him non-stop to seek out an actual answer. Bakugou didn't want to imagine the damage those flimsy answers would cause in lovestruck fools.

"I wouldn't cheat on you," said Todoroki, slowly inching slightly closer to Bakugou. "You're more than enough for me. And you'd definitely murder me if I even thought about cheating on you."

"Murder is too nice of a word for what I'd do to you and the other person if you actually did," scoffed Bakugou, tapping the signboard a couple of times on his shoulder. "Not that I think you'd ever do something like that…"

"You're also the only person I want to flirt with," added Todoroki, successfully breaching Bakugou's personal space and nearly glueing the side of his body to his lover's. "You're a better smooth talker than I am, but your adorable reactions when I successfully deliver one are the best. No one but you would be able to blush like that or make a face like that one from the other day. Flirting doesn't sound that much fun if it's not with you, Bakugou."

"It's not like I flirt with you on purpose…" grumbled Bakugou with a small voice, his face creasing even further with a frown. "It just happens, okay?"

"You can flirt more with me if you want to," said Todoroki, a small smile on his lips as he leaned his face closer to Bakugou's ear. "Though we would end up bothering our neighbours a lot more during the night. Maybe we should. It's not like anyone in the 4th and 5th floors have ever said anything about your mo- Ouch!!"

"W-We'll cover more ground if we're on our own so I'll go left and you go right," hurriedly babbled Bakugou, his earlobes beet red as he pushed Todoroki's face away from him with an advertisement sign slam. He then yomped the hell out of there at the speed of light, barking a few threatening advertising words to another group of visitors during his emergency retreat.

Todoroki and his straightforward invitations were already hard to deal with during regular days - Bakugou was not mentally ready to face the upgraded princely version of that type of flirting.

"But I wanted to walk around the school festival with you…" said Todoroki, his words scattering away with a metaphorical wind as he found himself all alone in the crowded street out of the blue. Though he was used to the cute koala and had managed to get a few tastes of the sexy snake, Todoroki still wasn't very good at dealing with

Bakugou's whimsical cat persona. He inwardly released an exasperated sigh, his advertisement sign sliding out of his shoulder.

Todoroki was already surrounded by curious visitors and students before he had the opportunity to go chase after Bakugou.

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Has that moron never heard of freaking TPO!?, inwardly hissed Bakugou, rushing through the crowd with his face sizzling with a blush. *He's not into public places, he says. He doesn't want others to see my supposedly cute face, he says!! Then why are you dropping lines like that in the middle of the street, Todoroki, you stupid sexy jerk!?*

"Heh… Hehehe…" laughed Bakugou, his lips curling up to an evil smirk straight out of an S class villain. He came to a stop and stabbed the advertisement sign's pole on the dirt, leisurely leaning his back on the tree behind him. "Once this stupid school festival is over… I'm gonna rip and shred that damned outfit into oblivion with my own two hands!"

Then I'll make sure I'm extra loud, just so you can spend the rest of the weekend giving your annoying 'yes or no' replies to our neighbours, inwardly sneakered Bakugou, his evil smirk upgrading a couple of levels more - to the point all passersby were actively avoiding that whole shaded area.

With his usual schemes all laid out in his brain, Bakugou released a small sigh and crouched down next to the tree. His eyes vacantly observed the crowd made up of students and visitors, all of them having fun in the street stalls run by the economy classes.

"I wanted to walk around a bit more with him…" whispered Bakugou

with a sigh, his head dropping just the slightest in disappointment. Though they had been dating for over a month now, there were moments where Bakugou couldn't deal with Todoroki at all. Or better yet, he didn't know how to deal with him.

They had a relatively homie lifestyle, with all of the home-cooked meals and shared sleeping space. Getting a bit more steamy during the night was a quite frequent occurrence too, even if mostly reigned in to avoid waking up the whole dorm and not become an inconvenience during their hero training. It was almost like a small scale version of cohabitation.

But food, sleep and sex had nothing to do with the emotional part of the relationship, had it? None of the three could teach Bakugou how not to feel overly conscious of Todoroki when he dressed or behaved differently from usual and neither could they stop his heart from going ballistic in his ribcage with the faintest of smiles on his usually expressionless face. If after a month none of that had faded away in the slightest, did that mean Bakugou would have that side effect of love perpetually striking at him for the rest of his life?

"I'm becoming way too weak against that dense tree's sudden 'attacks'…" mumbled Bakugou, releasing a long sigh as he got back up once again. He pulled the sign's pole from the dirt and tapped it a couple of times to not get himself or his clothes dirtied by particles of moist soil. He leaned the advertisement sign on his shoulder and dived into the bustling crowd a second time.

I should start paying him back with the same coin, continued Bakugou in the back of his mind with a grumbling inner voice. *The problem is that it usually comes back to bite me in the fuckin' ass. In the most literal of senses! I should do it with different… methods…… Huh?*

"Isn't that the same…?" mumbled Bakugou with a small voice, his body automatically coming to a halt in front of one of the street stalls. He then made a direct beeline to the stall, stopping once again a

couple of steps away from it to study the object more closely without raising unnecessary attention from the visitors enjoying the stall's services. He snorted, a knowing smirk tugging at the corner of his lips. "It *is* the same ugly motherfucker… Hey, you over there! How much is one play?"

"500 yen and you get 3 balls to throw," explained the economy student manning the game-themed stall. The student gestured towards the prize display with theatrical motions, magically popping out three colourful balls with the other hand. "You can take home all the prizes you hit and make fall with the balls!"

"Yeah, yeah, whatever," grumbled Bakugou, placing the sign down next to the stall and taking his now free hand to his wallet. Correction, the place where his wallet usually was when he wore his school uniform. *Fuck!! I don't have a single coin on me!!!!!* "Hey, gimme those 500 yen!"

Bakugou blurted out those words at the drop of a hat the moment he saw the shiny appearance of a 500-yen coin in the corner of his eye. Only then did he notice that, no matter how anyone looked at it, he, a high school student dressed in savage-looking clothes, had just tried to extort money from two elementary school-aged children. A young boy and girl nearly in tears while clutching at their precious allowance.

Shit! , inwardly cursed Bakugou, frozen in place as he glanced down at the terrified expression in both children's faces. He had been in one too many Quirk incidents with children to know where this could go. He needed to act and fast! "Ah… I forgot my wallet in my class so how about we make a deal? I get you the prizes you want with the first two balls and you gimme the last one. If I can't get what you want, you can have all of the prizes. Sounds good?"

The two children exchanged a glance between themselves and then slowly nodded their heads with a certain hesitation. The young boy cautiously approached Bakugou and dropped the 500-yen coin in his

hand when he stretched it out to him.

"Okay, runt, what d'ya want?" asked Bakugou, slamming the coin in the stall's counter to pay for the three plays. He received three colourful balls in exchange.

"Um… I want that game over there…" said the young boy, tiptoeing as much as he could to point at one of the bottom shelves, where the box of the latest model of a popular handheld gaming device was neatly stored in display.

"That one? Got it," acknowledged Bakugou, picking up one of the balls and throwing and catching it several times to get used to its size, weight and feel. He closely studied the stall, the shelves and the prize in question as he did so.

Heh heh heh… You're too naive, inwardly sneered the economy student, his face all smiles as he awaited the obvious result of those three plays. *The more expensive prizes have all been rigged to be extremely hard to get. Not even an earthquake would make that box fall! You'll use up all of your balls in that box and not get a single prize out of it. Maybe if the brats drop their entire budget on this stall, they'll get some consolation prize out of it but definitely not that game. I'm sorry but capitalism is just like this. Heh heh!*

"DIE!!" roared Bakugou all of a sudden, a small explosion exuding out of his hand as he threw the ball. The colourful ball hit the corner of the gaming device's box with enough strength to make it spin slightly on the shelf. A spin that caused it to remain half suspended in the air, half placed on the shelf for a few seconds before it lost its balance and started falling towards the ground.

"Ohhhh! You did it! You really did it!!" celebrated the young boy, his expression doing a 180 from frightened to completely ecstatic.

"Amazing!!" exclaimed the young girl, her petite face glistening with awe and surprise.

NO WAY!!!, inwardly screeched the economy student, his reflexes acting up super quick to grab the expensive gaming device before it reached the floor. He placed the box in the counter, a forced smile on his face as he fearfully glanced at the remaining two balls. *That was just a fluke, right? Beginner's good luck… right?*

"Alright, next one," said Bakugou, grabbing the second ball and glancing down at the young girl. "What is it you want?"

"I want that big teddy bear," said the young girl, pointing at the white-furred teddy bear with a bright red ribbon around its neck sitting on the top shelf. It easily had twice the size of the gaming device's box.

"I'm on it!" acknowledged Bakugou, momentarily studying the display once again before he explosively threw the second ball. The colourful ball passed a hair away from the teddy bear, ruffling past its furred head and erupting a disappointed gasp from the young girl. But the ball hit the back of the shelving unit and bounced towards them once again, this time hitting the back of the teddy bear's large body. It wobbled and wobbled until weight and gravity did the rest. The large white teddy bear fell on the floor with a muffled sound.

"Yay!! You got the teddy bear!!" celebrated the young girl, jumping up and down on the same spot with her arms raised high in the air.

T-This stall is doomed into going broke…, inwardly sobbed the economy student, sluggishly picking up the teddy bear from the floor and placing it on the counter next to the gaming device. *One more to go… What pricey prize will this greedy demon go after next, I wonder…*

"I got you the prizes you wanted like I promised so can I have the third ball?" asked Bakugou, picking up the third and last ball from the counter.

"Yup!!" acknowledged the two young children in unison, both happily grinning at Bakugou while they nodded their heads.

"Nice~" said Bakugou, his knowing smirk becoming even more demon-like as he readied himself to throw the last ball. The colourful ball once again hit the mark, this time making a small plush toy fall from the shelves. He didn't even need to use an explosion to gain momentum and speed to topple down the ugly creature.

Okay, he's a weird greedy demon, inwardly concluded the economy student as he leaned down to grab the plush toy from the floor. He placed it next to the other, much bigger and much more expensive prizes, and said, "Will you be playing once again or will you take just these with you?"

"Nah, I'm done," scoffed Bakugou, picking up the gaming device and the teddy bear from the counter to pass them over to the two small children. He then snatched his much smaller prize and stuffed it inside of his pants' pocket. When the stall attendant was going back to the shelves to rearrange them, he added, "However, you're not done yet."

"Excuse me?" inquired the economy student, an eyebrow arched in stupefaction as he looked over his shoulder. He slowly got back to the counter when he saw Bakugou urging him closer. His face turned ghastly pale the moment Bakugou opened his mouth once again.

"I won't tell anyone your class rigged your stall so how about you do my class a little favour and advertise our café booth to all of your

customers?" suggested Bakugou, using one of his hands to pick up the advertisement sign and push it against the flabbergasted student's chest. "I'll be waiting in 1-A's classroom for that sign. How about you and the rest of your class return it to me when you go eat something there for afternoon tea? Hm?"

"O-Okay…" acknowledged the economy student after swallowing in dry. He then released a small sigh of relief.

Idiot, you and your entire class are gonna have the detention of your lives the moment you arrive at my classroom after I report this to Aizawa-sensei, snorted Bakugou, sideways glancing at the retreating student. He suddenly felt something tugging at his red mantle and, as such, he looked down to the source of the pulling and tugging. "What now?"

"Can you tell us who you are, big brother?" inquired the young girl, struggling a bit to keep the large teddy bear from touching the floor.

"Heh! I'm an evil usurper," said Bakugou with a smug smirk. "I just stole an entire kingdom and its prince so be careful. I might claim those prizes as mine too."

"Uzu… Usur… Huh?" tried to say the young boy, but he just fumbled the word all over the place. The young girl's head was tilted to the left as she thought more closely about the unknown word.

"Too hard for you two runts, huh?" laughed Bakugou, majestically adjusting his red mantle before he crouched down in front of the children. "It's like a king that steals from other kings to become a king. So an evil king, I guess."

"But you're so cool, how can you be an evil king?" said the young boy, fervently shaking his head in denial. "I'm sure others are just

misunderstanding you! You're not evil, you're super, duper cool! Like, like… Like a hero!!"

"Yeah, you got us these after we tried so many times so you're not an evil king," agreed the young girl, slowly pushing the heavy teddy bear forward to have it give a kiss to Bakugou's cheek. "You're definitely a hero! Thank you, hero!"

Why am I getting some Deku vibes from these two brats…? , inwardly groaned Bakugou, a small shudder crawling up his spine at recalling the sparkling stares his childhood friend used to throw at him from the shadows while stalking him around their neighbourhood. He rolled his eyes around and gave a small pat to the children's heads. "Sure, whatever. I have to get back to my stolen kingdom so bye."

"Ah! Wait…!" called the young boy, this time he being the one who grabbed Bakugou's red mantle as he got back up.

"Like I said, what now?" hissed Bakugou, nearly losing his balance from being strongly tugged while in a bad position.

"We're lost," said the two children at the same time, an anxious look on their faces as they exchanged a quick glance with one another and then looked back at Bakugou. "We can't find the way back to our big sis…"

"Huh!?" growled Bakugou, an angry frown twisting his face as he glared daggers at the small children. "You should have said something sooner! Why are you playing prize games if you're lost? You should be asking for help, not playing around and worrying your sister!"

"Sorry…" timidly apologised the two children, once again in unison.

"Geez… Do you remember what's your sister's class or know what her class is doing?" asked Bakugou after releasing a small sigh.

"Big sis's a second-year student," said the young girl, a huge grin popping out on her face once again. "Her class is doing a big exhibition about famous graduate heroes from U.A.!"

"All Might was there earlier in the morning and he was also so cool!" excitedly added the young boy. "Big sis was busy guiding the visitors and couldn't come to see the school festival with us so we came alone. We didn't know the school was so big… But then we met you, hero, so everything's okay now!"

"If it's the exhibition I think it is, then it's in the TDL gym. I'll take you there so let's get going," announced Bakugou, finally getting back up to a full standing position. He gave a small jerk with his chin to urge the two siblings to follow him but things couldn't be that simple, now could they? The young girl could hardly walk without tripping on the oversized teddy bear and the young boy was constantly adjusting the big box he was carrying against his chest. Having no other option, Bakugou picked up the young girl and the teddy bear and held them against his chest with one arm, snatching the game's box from the young boy and placing it under his other arm to be able to hold his hand and not have him get lost in the middle of the crowd. He looked at the two of them and asked, "Ready to go now?"

"Yup~!" cheerfully acknowledged the siblings, cheerfully grinning at each other before turning their smiling expressions to Bakugou. "Thank you, hero!"

"My name's Bakugou so stop with the 'hero' already," sighed Bakugou, departing from the stall with all the extra 'luggage' attached to him. He was a hero-in-training aiming to become a pro hero but being so blatantly called a 'hero' was a bit… overwhelming, maybe. And in so

many different ways.

"Bakugou?" repeated the young boy, glancing up at the blonde as they slowly walked down the street. "Bakugou…"

"If it's Bakugou, then you can be Gou-chan!" declared the young girl, closely hugging the teddy bear while being carried by their new friend. She glanced down at her brother. "Right?"

"Yeah, Gou-chan's perfect!" acknowledged the young boy, nodding his head a couple of times.

"The hell it is!" growled Bakugou in half-embarrassed. He was so done with those two siblings… "I just said my name's Bakugou. Don't start giving me idiotic nicknames as you please, brats! I'd rather you call me 'hero' again than something so stupid!"

"But Gou-chan suits you, Gou-chan," started the young girl, nodding her head in acknowledgement at her naming sense. "When you were throwing the balls, you were going all 'rooooar' and 'booom'. Even now you're being all 'groooooowl'. Gou-chan is a really good name for you."

"I don't care! I don't like it and I don't want it!" hissed Bakugou, furiously glaring at the young girl. It was a good thing he didn't tell them his first name or he'd probably wind up being nicknamed 'Kacchan' by another child for the second time in a single lifetime. *No wonder I was getting Deku vibes from them… They're fucking flour from the same fucking sack!!!*

"Eh~ But I like Gou-chan!" insisted the young girl, giving small tugs at the white-furred portion of Bakugou's red mantle. "Please, Gou-chan?"

"Yeah! Please, Gou-chan?" also beckoned the young boy, holding Bakugou's hand more strongly while giving it small tugs.

"No way! I don't like it! Stop calling me that!" growled Bakugou in utter frustration. The TDL gym never seemed so far away as that day.

"Um… Excuse me?"

"Huh?" hissed Bakugou, slowly turning his raging features to the voice that had called out to him. He found two young adults closely studying one of the paper maps offered to the visitors at the school's entrance.

"Even with a map, we're a bit confused here," said the young man, an awkward small smile on his face as he scratched the back of his head. "We're looking for class 1-A's classroom."

"..." Bakugou silently stared at the duo, a suspicious frown present on his brows. He had never met or even seen any of the two but, for some reason, a certain bell rang in the depths of his brain. "Keep following this street until you reach that big building over there. Then just climb the stairs to the first year's classrooms. It should be easy to spot there."

"Thanks," said the young man, the young woman next to him also offering a small bow.

"Gou-chan, let's go?" asked the young girl, urging Bakugou into motion once again by pulling at the fluffy mantle.

"I told you to stop calling me that!!" hissed Bakugou, sadly only erupting a couple of giggles from the two small siblings.

"Should we eat lunch there?" inquired the young woman, likewise departing from that spot but walking in the opposite direction as Bakugou. "I don't know if we'll be able to talk with him much during lunch rush hour, though."

"I'd rather have some cold soba and sashimi, to be honest," said the young man, pointing with his finger to the map. "I heard the responsible for the canteen is a pro hero slash pro chef. Our inside informer said they at least have cold soba there sooo, you know what I'm getting at."

"Hey!" called Bakugou all of a sudden, hastily turning around to face the lost duo. Both of them also turned around, surprised at being addressed a second time by the child-carrying cosplaying student. "Todoroki's out there doing some advertising right now so you're better off going to the café booth after lunchtime."

"Gou-chan!!" called the young boy, pulling at Bakugou's hand to also urge him to move. "Let's go! I'm hungry!"

"Shut up, I know!" hissed Bakugou, finally fully resuming with his slow walk towards the TDL gym. "And stop calling me that stupid name!"

"How did he know we're here for Shouto?" inquired Fuyumi, her head slightly tilted as she observed the student and the two children with him walk away.

"Maybe he's a friend of his or something," said Natsuo with a shrug of his shoulders. "Well, since Shouto isn't in his classroom right now, let's

get that cold soba and sashimi from the canteen!"

Chapter 44

"Big sis!!" screamed the two young children at the same time, both excitedly waving at a student worriedly looking around the entrance door of the TDL gym.

"Geez, where did you two go!?" admonished the 2nd year student, immediately running towards her younger siblings. "I've been looking all over the place for you! Do you know how worried I was?"

"We got lost…" said the young girl, a saddened expression on her face as she tightly hugged her teddy bear. A happy expression soon followed, though, as she switched her attention from the prize plush toy to the student carrying her. "But then Gou-chan found us and got us these and then helped us get back to you! Gou-chan's a super cool hero!"

"Gou-chan was saying he's an evil king but that's just people saying bad things about him," added the young boy, furiously shaking his head in denial. "He's a really cool and good king! A hero, big sis, he's our hero!"

"Gou-chan…?" repeated the 2nd year student. The moment she paid a bit more attention to the student who had taken her siblings to the TDL, her whole body froze in place. *G-Gou-chan is… the winner of the sports festival… Bakugou Katsuki from the hero course!?!?*

"There, you're back safe and sound so beat it already, brats," growled Bakugou, passing the gaming device's box to the young boy before he crouched down and placed the young girl on the floor. He threateningly warned them, "If I see you two waltzing around the school grounds again without someone tall enough to ride a roller-coaster with you, I'm gonna take those prizes from you. Understood!?"

"Okay~!" acknowledged the two young siblings in unison, happily nodding their heads at Bakugou's words.

"Ah… Um… T-Thank you very much for taking care of them and bringing them back to me," nervously said the 2nd year student, bowing her head at Bakugou a couple of times as she pulled her siblings closer to her.

"And you too! If you invited them to the school festival, then make sure you pay attention to those two pests and don't let them run wild through the school grounds!" admonished Bakugou even further, accusingly pointing his finger at the older female student. "If you're busy with the exhibition, just keep them tied to a chair or something until you're on your break!"

Ehhh!? Unreasonable much!?, inwardly yelped the 2nd year student, bowing her head at the raging hero-in-training a couple of times more while babbling some apologies.

"Big sis, let's go eat something!" requested the young boy, gently tugging at his older sister's school uniform. "I'm hungry."

"Can you wait just a little bit more?" requested the 2nd year student, crouching down next to her younger siblings to be able to talk with them more easily. "I have one more hour and a half of touring to do. After that, we can walk around the school festival and eat as much good stuff as you want. Okay?"

"Okay…" acknowledged the young boy, his shoulders dropping considerably even with his older sister loving pats to his head.

"Then can we stay with Gou-chan a bit more?" asked the young girl, passing her large white teddy bear to her older sister before she darted

running towards Bakugou. "You're tall enough to ride a roller-coaster, right, Gou-chan?"

"Huh!? No way! I'm no babysitter!" immediately refused Bakugou, doing his best to gently push the young girl out of his leg… but the damned kid didn't want to let him go come hell or high water! He accusingly pointed at their older sister once again when the young boy also attached himself to his other leg and began with more begging chants and puppy-eyed glances. "Do something about your damned siblings already! I also have shit to do!"

"I'm sorry, I'll try to-"

"No! I want to spend more time with Gou-chan!" insisted the young girl, hiding behind Bakugou's leg to run away from her older sister. "Just until you finish your work. Please, big sis? Please! Pretty please? Gou-chan?"

"Don't look at me like that! I ain't gonna carry you around the damned school festival!" hissed Bakugou, a vein nearly popping out on his forehead. He grabbed both of the young siblings by the back of their upper clothes and lifted them from the floor with the ease of someone picking up a pair of pillows. He turned them around and summoned all of his demon overlord energy to growl some last words to the two annoying brats. "You're the ones who are misunderstanding me, you dolts! I helped you because I don't want to get involved in another Quirk incident and get grounded until graduation day. So I was helping myself only! Not you! If you keep annoying the shit out of me with that 'Gou-chan' crap and sticking to me like glue, I'm gonna blow up with your prizes and make you cry so hard you will cry no more for the rest of your miserable lives! Now beat it and cower in fear behind your sister!"

"Gou-chan, you're so strong!!" yelped the young boy in overjoyed awe, his eyes sparkling in excitement as he wiggled his arms in the air.

"Can you pick us up even higher, Gou-chan?" requested the young girl, giggling non-stop as she gestured her tiny hands towards the sky. "Like, suuuuuper high!"

I ain't gonna get rid of these two pests until their sister is off duty, will I…?, inwardly cringed Bakugou, loudly clicking his tongue in annoyance as he put the two children back down on the floor. He then quickly turned around on his heels and started walking away, hoping that would make them get the message loud and clear. But the two young siblings obviously followed after him and glued themselves to his legs and red mantle without thinking twice. *Fuuuuuuuck!!*

"Shit, fine! I get it! So let go of my legs already!" roared Bakugou, halting once again before all three of them tasted the ground with their whole faces. "You want some grub? I'll give you some damned grub! But you're paying for the freaking bill as soon as you finish your shift, got it!?"

"O-O-Okay…!" stammered the 2nd year student, nervously nodding her head with quick movements.

Goddammit, I'm pretty sure this is not how anyone's supposed to recruit customers to a freaking café booth!!, inwardly screeched Bakugou, grudgingly picking up both of the young siblings and carrying them from the TDL gym all the way back to the main school building. *I sure hope that dense tree also didn't mess it up and caused utter chaos during his advertising break!*

Bakugou, however, should have known better than anyone the strength and coercive power a Prince Todoroki Shouto had. Even if done in a completely unconscious way.

And it also completely slipped his mind the utter craziness a little bit of fanservice could cause within a certain portion of the female population and how quickly news spread inside of a school.

"What the fuck is this…?" gasped Bakugou, a completely lost semblance as he looked at the huge line crossing the entire corridor until it connected with class 1-A's classroom. Students, visitors, from all ages and genders were excitedly lining up one after the other while waiting for tables to free up inside of the fantasy-themed cosplay café booth that had become the number one spot to visit during the school festival. A bad - really bad - feeling started growing in his brain as Bakugou approached the classroom's door. And sure enough, it was utter chaos in there.

"B-Bakugou… help… please…" sobbed Kaminari, tiredly carrying another shipment of dirty dishes, cups, glasses and cutlery towards the kitchen area in the canteen. "We're at breaking point already… Do something about it… I'm begging you…"

Argh, why do I live in a world filled with stupid idiots and morons…?, inwardly groaned Bakugou, rolling his eyes around at Kaminari's half wrecked semblance. He sighed and adjusted his hold on the two young siblings. "Hey, brats. I need to get some work done too so just stay still and don't say a single word, 'kay? I'll give you something to eat after I get my kingdom back in order."

"Okay!" acknowledged the two young siblings with a nod of their heads.

After another sigh, Bakugou approached the busy-looking Ojiro and Shouji, who were still manning the café booth's entrance. He didn't even need to spell anything out to them, they readily got the door open to allow entrance to their last ray of hope. They sure were desperate, by the look on their faces.

"I stay away from my lands for a short while and you peasants think you can take over my kingdom!?" loudly roared Bakugou, catching everyone inside of the table's area by surprise. Both his classmates and the customers they were attending looked over in his direction, the former experiencing utter confusion by seeing Bakugou carrying two unknown children with him and the latter getting even more excited by the missing character's so awaited return. He furiously glared daggers at everyone in the classroom. "Mind explaining to the usurper what is the meaning of all of this? And fast, for rolling heads speak no more than a rock!"

"Ah… Well…" hesitantly started Midoriya, timidly holding his tray in front of his body while he averted fully looking at Bakugou. "The thing is… our Prince is… I-I mean, the former Prince is already back to y-your kingdom and he… didn't exactly come back alone…"

So it really is that idiot's fault!!!, inwardly roared Bakugou, his rage flaring up even further as he turned his face to the throne and found Todoroki at death's doors there. Kaminari had seemed exhausted from all the kitchen's physical work but Todoroki appeared to be mentally drained due to too much social interaction.

If the main culprit had been someone else, Bakugou would have probably dealt with the situation differently. But it was his damned boyfriend they were talking about there. The words rolled out of his tongue faster than he could fully process them.

"What do you think you're doing, you jerk?" hissed Bakugou, walking up to the throne and the half-dead Todoroki sitting down on it. He slammed his foot on the throne's backrest, placing it right next to Todoroki's expressionless face. "I've been busting my ass for this stupid kingdom while looking after these two brats, I must add, yet you dared to parade around my lands and gather a full horde of peasants around what is mine? Decapitation would be too nice of a punishment for you. I'm gonna destroy what you created right before your damned eyes!!"

"...?" Todoroki quizzically observed Bakugou as he placed the two unknown young children on his lap, wondering why he had returned to the classroom with them clutching tight to him. He had seen far too many scenes where Bakugou had brought children to tears due to his menacing appearance so it felt extremely foreign to see him arriving at the classroom with two of them in tow.

"Why are you all still sitting? You dare to disrespect the usurper!?" loudly roared Bakugou, his foot strongly stomping on the floor and making plenty shiver in fright. It didn't take all of the customers half a second to obediently get up from their seats and stand upright as straight as an arrow. "Now out! All of you peasants are banned from my kingdom! Take all that you have looted from my lands and begone! I am far too busy to personally deal with every single one of you peasants!"

"...Eh? But we're-"

"Oh? It seems you want to be present while I torture the former Prince and his subjects," said Bakugou, smugly cocking his head to the left while he looked down on the young woman that had enough guts to voice out her displeasure at being kicked out of the café booth without any warning. His demon overlord-like condescending smirk made yet another appearance at that moment. "You can stay, then. But you won't be leaving this room in one piece, that I can assure you. Hehe…"

"Um…" meekly intervened Uraraka too, inadvertently raising one of her hands in the air as if she had been in a mid-class situation. "We have a collective break scheduled to happen within five minutes. I'm sorry for the inconvenience and for interrupting you while you're eating, but we need to ask you to leave the café booth for a while. You're always welcome to come back once our lunch break is over, of course."

"Oh, I see. Then I guess it can't be helped."

After being fed with the excuse Uraraka thought up on the spot to explain Bakugou's sudden verbal explosion, the customers orderly left the classroom with the promise they'd return once again after exploring the rest of the school festival. They also informed the students and visitors lined up in the corridor, apologising to them almost one by one.

"We're saved…" sighed Ashido, her body all but sliding against the nearest wall until she tiredly flopped on the floor. "That was a nice move, Bakugou, Ochako-chan…"

"The kitchen can finally take a break now…" groaned Kirishima, taking a seat on one of the tables and slamming his face on its surface. He didn't even feel the pain, that was how exhausted he was.

"Hey, morons…"

Oh no!, gasped the entire class, their eyes fearfully glancing over in Bakugou's direction. They didn't need to see his face to know he was fuming mad at the moment but the unknown made them even more scared of not facing their raging classmate.

"Happy now that your oh so precious capitalization of the male side of the class has completely doomed you!?" roared Bakugou, two loud explosions reverberating out of his hands and echoing through the silent classroom. "Because I sure am happy that I get to slaughter all of my slaves once the day is fucking over!!!"

Though they had all realised by then that they had let their excitement take the best of them, it was at that precise moment they truly understood how lightly they had taken a school event of U.A. High School's magnitude. They were completely to blame there, as

they had already experienced in first person the sports festival and the national-wide attention it incurred. They had been far too naive and pushed their luck by inciting more popularity to themselves when they were already the focus of plenty of attention after countless villain attacks and spotlight placements in TV broadcasted events - even if there was a limited and controlled amount of visitors this time around.

"I'm sorry…" they apologised, a slight demoralising wave hitting the class alongside their exhaustion.

"You better be 'cause the school festival is far from finished," said Bakugou with an annoyed click of his tongue. He crossed his arms over his chest but still pointed with his thumb in the door's direction. "Most of you idiots didn't see it but the line outside reached the end of the damned corridor. It was a bigger line than the one by the canteen! We don't have enough manpower, tables or supplies to feed that many people. So find a different method to attend to the customers because what you've been doing so far will not cut it anymore."

"Bakugou's right, we're nearly out of ingredients and we still have the whole afternoon to go through," said Satou with an affirmative nod. "We won't last more than an hour if we keep going at this rhythm."

"We could establish a time limit per table, which can control the flux of customers to a certain degree," suggested Midoriya, his brain going into full strategizing mode. He continued mumbling, "No, better than that would be to give numbered tickets to the upcoming customers with an allotted time period written in it. Maybe with a first come, first served basis. We would have full control of how many more customers we would receive and could properly plan out the amount of ingredients we're going to need."

"You have been keeping track of the food supplies, right, Satou-san?" inquired Yaoyorozu, a slightly concerned expression on her face as she glanced at the utterly wrecked kitchen and backstage team. It was

hard on the serving team to have such a big number of customers but it was exponentially worse for those working out of view. "If we follow Midoriya-san's suggestions, how many customers do you think we'd be able to serve?"

"Around 50, maybe a bit more. But definitely no more than 70," sighed Satou after a small pause to make some mental calculations. "Of course, that's just an estimate. It depends on what they request from the menu."

"We should make 70 customers our limit then," suggested Iida, removing the helmet covering his sweaty features. "It's also a doable number to stretch out throughout the afternoon and it gives us enough spare time to take more breaks and rest."

"We should have taken our breaks into account some more while planning out the café booth," said Asui, settling her tray on top of the table before she took a seat there. "The food industry is harsher than I initially thought."

"For sure…" tiredly groaned the whole class in acknowledgement.

"That's because you suck at management and don't plan things properly from the damned start," scoffed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. He clicked his tongue yet again when he felt someone tugging at his red mantle. "What now?"

"Gou-chan, can we talk now?" inquired the young girl and boy at the same time, their heads tilted as they peered up at Bakugou.

"'Gou-chan'…?" repeated Sero, his eyebrow arched in wonder as he sized up the two small children sticking to the last person he ever thought kids would want to approach.

Short moments later, the whole class exploded in laughter.

"Ahahahaha! Gou-chan! Ahahahaha!" laughed Kirishima, repeatedly tapping his hand on the table as his body convulsed around in amusement.

"That one far surpasses Midoriya's 'Kacchan'!" said Sero, doubling over his stomach slightly from the intense laughing attack he was going through. "Pure gold!"

"The best part is that it does suit him!" snorted Ashido before she broke into uncontrollable laughter yet again. "I mean, with all of the yelling and growling and such, that one is a perfect fit for Bakugou! Ahahahaha!"

"SHUT UP!!" roared Bakugou, glaring daggers at his laughing classmates. But it only made it worse, it only made them laugh even more. He was proving them right, after all.

"Why did you bring those two kids with you?" asked Todoroki, the only one completely unaffected by the wave of laughter. "Do you know them from somewhere?"

"This is all your fault…" grumbled Bakugou with a sour expression on his face. If Todoroki hadn't whispered those flirtatious words to him, he wouldn't have implemented the 'divide to conquer' advertising strategy. But, at the same time, if they hadn't parted ways at that time, Bakugou wouldn't have bumped into that product in the economy class's stalls, so it felt somewhat wrong to throw all the blame on Todoroki. "They're only sticking around until their negligent sister finishes her shift at the exhibition in the TDL. So that means one more hour of babysitting…"

"How old are you two?" asked Uraraka, crouching down in front of the two young children. They readily ran off and hid behind Bakugou's legs, neatly protected underneath his red mantle.

"Six years old…" said the young boy, peeking at the pink-coloured, pointed hat witch suddenly talking to them. "We're twins…"

"They're scared of Ochako-chan but okay with Bakugou?" chuckled Hagakure, her seemingly empty school uniform floating closer to the tables. "That's the ultimate contradiction right there!"

"Gou-chan's not scary! He's a super cool hero!" said the young boy with a proud nod of his head. "Right?"

"Yeah! Gou-chan got us a game and a teddy bear this big!" added the young girl, gesturing her hands around to exemplify the size of her prize. "And then he took us to big sis when we told him we were lost."

"I'm surprised you didn't scare them away or make them cry, like what happened during our date," deadpanned Todoroki, though he was slightly relieved that Bakugou didn't have to go through another bad experience with children due to the way he looks.

"We're finally free from our punishment starting today. Like hell I'm gonna screw up and get a second dose of that!" scoffed Bakugou, yanking his mantle to uncover the children hidden behind his legs. "C'mon, brats, hurry up and sit in whatever table you want. Pick whatever you want from the menu too."

"Gou-chan, what's your favourite food?" inquired the young girl, leisurely climbing the closest chair to them with her sibling. "I wanna

eat that!"

"You'd die if you ate it so stick to the menu only," groaned Bakugou, sliding the menu over the table's surface so the two kids could pick what they wanted to eat for lunch. Their sister had already guaranteed the monetary financing so he could care less about what they did with her money.

"I think the menchi katsu sandwich set would be the best lunch menu for you two," suggested Midoriya, a big smile on his lips as he pointed to the mentioned item on the menu. He was just an adventurer so they probably wouldn't be scared of him like it had happened with Uraraka.

"What's your favourite thing from the menu then?" asked the young boy, pulling the menu from underneath Midoriya's finger and passing it back to Bakugou. "We'll eat that!"

"C-Completely ignored…" sobbed Midoriya, his shoulders slumping down in disappointment and resignation.

"Like I said, just eat whatever you want from there!" growled Bakugou, pushing the menu back to the table. "I was the one who made that thing so whatever it is you choose, it's gonna be good. Hurry it up or I'm dragging you back to your sister right now!"

"Okay~" acknowledged the two siblings in unison, both picking up the menu once again and happily discussing with one another what they would eat.

I have a bad feeling about this…, inwardly said Todoroki, blankly staring at the two children. He walked up to Bakugou and smoothly pulled him further away from the table while the kids were

entertained with the menu. "Bakugou, what happened while you were advertising on your own?"

"Long story short, I bumped into those two while they were being scammed by a stall run by one of the economy classes, helped them getting the prizes they wanted out of the stall and then took them to their sister, whose class is doing an exhibition at the TDL, when they told me they were lost," said Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. No way in hell would he tell Todoroki that it had all started because he coincidentally spotted that ugly creature amidst the stall's prizes and nearly extorted money out of the two siblings with his rush to get it before someone else did. "Speaking of which, I need to report to Aizawa-sensei that the economy class that rigged their stall will pop up here during the afternoon. Heh, the poor idiots think I'm gonna keep it a secret if they advertise our café booth for us. Has Aizawa-sensei come by the classroom yet?"

"As far as I know, not yet," said Todoroki with a small shake of his head. He glanced over to the table yet again. “Do you think their sister will come to get them before we open the café booth for the afternoon run?”

“That’ll depend on how long our ‘lunch break’ will be, no?” pointed out Bakugou, also glancing over to the two cheerful siblings. He then quickly surveyed their surroundings once again and, this time around, he was the one who dragged Todoroki away into the separate kitchen area. Bakugou didn’t even wait five seconds before he grabbed onto Todoroki’s arm more closely and dropped his forehead on his shoulder. He tiredly groaned, “I’m so done with this stupid school festival…”

I see the adorable koala is back to 120%, inwardly noted Todoroki, vibing immensely at Bakugou’s 180 from ‘I’m gonna fuckin’ kill any breathing being within 100 km from me’ to ‘spoil me and me alone already, you jerk’ despite his demeanour remaining unchanged. He placed his hand on top of Bakugou’s head and leisurely patted it, his fingers entwining with spiky yet soft blonde strands. “It’s just a few more hours. Then we won’t need to worry about school festivals for

another year.”

“Argh… Two more freakin’ years to go, huh…” groaned Bakugou yet again, releasing a small sigh afterwards. “I’m so not doing anything food-related ever again in my whole life. Or service industry-related. Fuck what the class wants to do, I’m gonna go full-blown tyrant every year as soon as the school festival is announced! Or have it be cancelled, maybe…”

“Do you hate it that much?” inquired Todoroki, craning his head slightly so he could peek at Bakugou’s hidden features. “Because I kind of liked it when we were walking together earlier. If you hadn’t run away from me, I would have liked it even more, though.”

“Shaddup, I also wanted to walk around with you some more!” barked Bakugou, turning his head against Todoroki’s shoulder to glare dagger at him. “If you had turned off your flirtatious host persona when we left the classroom, I wouldn’t have to abort mission like that!”

“Flirtatious host persona?” repeated Todoroki, an eyebrow arched in wonder. He got even more confused when Bakugou silenced a frustrated howl against his shoulder. But nevermind that now. Todoroki fully took his hand from Bakugou’s head and motioned it further south, which he used to smoothly circle his naked lower back. “Bakugou, will you continue dressed like this or are you going to change back to your school uniform and stay in the kitchen?”

“Are you kidding me!? Like hell I’m gonna go back to the kitchen!” hissed Bakugou, immediately pushing his face out of Todoroki’s shoulder. “They can take care of themselves just fine! That’s something I can’t say about you and the damned- What’s with that face?”

“You accuse me of flirting with the customers, but aren’t you walking

around all over the school grounds showing off your body?" deadpanned Todoroki, though there was a small frown creasing his brows as he tightened his hold around Bakugou's waist even more. "And that conversation about cheating from earlier? You came back to the classroom all of a sudden holding two unknown kids. Two kids that are scared of Uraraka but are all over you. I'm not the one causing trouble. It's all you. The difference is that I don't have the same levels of intimidation you do."

"Bullshit!! If we ran a survey about the reasons why they came to the café booth, we'd have 'prince this, prince that' written all over the place!" said Bakugou, strongly stabbing his index finger on Todoroki's chest. "Which is why my 'levels of intimidation' are the only thing keeping this boat from sinking! If I wasn't scaring the crap out of everyone, the waiting line would have circled the whole building, not just the entire corridor! Shit, and then I'm the one who lacks self-awareness!"

"Bakugou, everyone that came to our classroom since I returned was asking when the usurper would come back too because they wanted more of the kidnapping and the 'prince being swept off his feet' or something like that," pointed out Todoroki, his expression becoming even more blank yet his frown more intense. "If you hadn't hijacked the serving team, we would have the same constant flow of customers we were having in the beginning, not overflowing with them. If I'm to blame for that constant flow of customers, then it's all your fault our popularity suddenly blew up."

"……!!" Mouth gaping wide open, Bakugou stared completely flabbergasted at Todoroki and his judgemental blank gaze. That was the opposite result he had planned to obtain. He came up with the most tyrannical and intimidating character possible in a fantasy setting and tried to dress it accordingly, hoping to scare away current customers and turn off future ones at sight only. To put it bluntly, the usurper was supposed to be the prince's antithesis.

"Since you don't seem to get it, I'll spell it out for you," said Todoroki, leaning his face closer to the dumbfounded Bakugou. "The more you

push others away, the closer they want to stick to you. Midoriya, Kirishima, Kaminari, everyone in our class, those two kids, all of them are an example of that. You can yell at them, threaten them, even bully or hit them, but that won't make them leave. You say my 'yes or no' answers are a problem but I think this side of you is even more problematic. Oh... Now I understand why I always feel so impatient when others are around you. It's all because of the backlash of your erotic intimidation strategies."

"What erotic intimidation strategies!?" growled Bakugou, forcing his glaring frown to startle the creeping blush on his face into flight. "And why is it my fault those idiots can't take a hint and leave me the heck alone!? I told Deku countless times to not even dream about coming to U.A. but that shitty nerd still followed me here! Kirishima and Kaminari also follow me around the school and training exercises all on their own! And the rest of our class is the same damn thing! Even those brats kept sticking to my legs and refused to stay with their sister after I took them to the TDL! How is any of that my fault? HUH!?"

"I know you're not doing it on purpose but all of that really pisses me off," sighed Todoroki, lightly bumping his forehead on Bakugou's. "Well, everything will be solved if I'm the one sticking close to you. You were the one who planted that seed in the customers' head. So no matter how much I flirt with you, it'll be just a part of our café booth's customer service. Right?"

"I'll kill you," warned Bakugou, pushing his closed fist against Todoroki's stomach and steadily grinding it more and more strongly there. "I swear I'll kill you if you try to pull that kind of crappy stunt!"

"Then stay in the kitchen area with the rest of your team," said Todoroki, lightly kissing Bakugou's cranky lips afterwards. "That'll solve everything."

"The hell it will!" hissed Bakugou, pulling his head back to more

easily voice all of his complaints. Because there were a lot of them. “It’ll solve your problems but mine will stay the same. I’m sticking to the usurper character, no matter how annoying it is to be out there!”

“Then I’ll continue being the prince you, the usurper, swept off of his feet once the café opens to the public again,” deadpanned Todoroki, as a display of dissatisfaction to both Bakugou’s answer and the way he pulled away from him. “It’s sort of the truth so you should be fine with it.”

“You’re being too- Tsk!” started Bakugou but he quickly cut himself off with a click of this tongue. Unreasonable was the word he was about to use but wouldn’t that just be the pot calling the kettle black? If Bakugou fit into the category of ‘evil mastermind’, then Todoroki was surely a prime example of ‘relentless pursuer’, changing between good and evil depending on what kind of ‘prey’ he couldn’t let go. “Fine… Do whatever you want…”

“I will,” acknowledged Todoroki, his eyes sparkling with enthusiasm. Having Bakugou together with him in the table’s area would surely make time go by faster and the whole interaction with the customers much more bearable. It might even be a quick fix to the date they never got to have out of the school festival. Todoroki was halfway done with fanning his excitement over the afternoon shift when Bakugou leaned closer to him - so close they could taste each other’s breath.

“You called it ‘erotic intimidation strategies’, wasn’t it? Do they work on you too?” inquired Bakugou, his lips slowly shaping up a mischievous smirk. His hands slid over Todoroki’s blue and golden coat until they circled around his neck. “If you manage to reach the end of the school festival without losing it completely and jumping me in the middle of the café booth, I’ll give you a nice reward. Something you’ve been wanting to get for a very long time now.”

I’m talking about that annoying koala plushie, obviously, but he doesn’t

need to know that yet, hehehe…, inwardly sneakered Bakugou, his red eyes rooted on Todoroki's gobsmack blank face as he released him and lowered his arms back down.

"Alright, time to get back inside and see if those two brats have already made up their minds," snorted Bakugou, tapping Todoroki's arms a couple of times to have him remove them from his waist. "C'mon, let go."

"Impossible," denied Todoroki, slowly shaking his head. Did Bakugou's erotic intimidation strategies work on him? The answer was yes. Yes, they did. And in a different way they worked on their classmates and random children. But it didn't stop at only the erotic intimidation strategies, it reached the point of Bakugou himself working on him, regardless of how he looked, what he said or what he did. "If I wasn't aware of everyone on the other side of this fake wall, I'd have pushed you down by now."

"Ahahahahahaha!" laughed Bakugou, slapping his hand on his mouth to keep himself on check with the sudden outburst. Once he calmed down the laughter attack, he lightly pressed his smirking lips on Todoroki's pouting features. "So it works this well, huh? Good luck keeping the table's area PG, Todoroki."

"You're so unfair…"

"That goes for both of us."

Chapter 45

“And we’re back!” announced Kaminari, opening the classroom’s door with his foot due to his hands being occupied with several bags and boxes. Todoroki, Kirishima, Uraraka, Yaoyorozu and Jirou followed right after him. “We brought all of the kitchen stuff you requested, Satou!”

“Great, we need to get some pies in the oven as soon as possible,” acknowledged Satou, quickly shovelling down the rest of his lunch so he could begin another cooking session. “Kaminari, Kirishima, can you give me a hand after you finish eating your lunch?”

“Sure thing!” acknowledged both Kaminari and Kirishima at the same time, quickly throwing a thumbs up at Satou while placing the bags and boxes on the kitchen area.

“You should prepare them in a big batch, bake a few and keep the remaining ones unbaked in the canteen’s fridge…” grumbled Bakugou under his breath, but still loud enough to be easily heard amidst childish giggles and non-stop babbling.

“We can’t do that, the apples will start oxidising and darkening,” pointed out Satou, trying to keep himself from laughing right on Bakugou’s face. Their resident ferocious beast tolerating the sticky presence of kids around him was far too entertaining to simply ignore.

“Keep the apple slices in a bowl with water and a bit of lemon juice and problem sol- Hey, stop with that, I’m trying to talk here, damn it!!” started explaining Bakugou only to hastily cut himself off and admonish the heck out of the unstoppable young siblings. He grabbed the back of the young boy’s upper clothes and dragged him out from underneath his red mantle. He then proceeded. “If you dilute the lemon juice in the water, the apple slices won’t taste like lemon after

the pie is baked. Why the fuck are you laughing!?"

"No. It's nothing," said Satou, fervently shaking his head in denial. Sero and Ashido, however, were doing little to nothing to keep their amused giggles from leaking out.

"You sound like an experienced housewife who has already raised her children to adulthood," deadpanned Todoroki, his expressionless voice becoming everyone's breaking point and causing yet another loud wave of laughter to flood the entire classroom.

"Fuck all of you!" hissed Bakugou, throwing the middle finger at Todoroki with one of his hands while using the other one to also drag the young girl from underneath his mantle. He viciously grabbed the young girl's head and threateningly growled. "My clothes are not a damned tent! Stop trying to play hide and seek with my mantle! If you've got nothing better to do until your sister arrives, I can think of a few dozens of ways of getting you to behave so sit. NOW!"

"We're not playing hide and seek, we were trying to find your koa-Mmmhnm?" corrected the young girl, but a large hand quickly sealed her mouth shut before she could babble more than she should.

"You were playing hide and seek, weren't you?" said Bakugou, his frowning features gaining some more demonic nuances as he closely glared at the annoying shortie.

"No, that's not it, Gou-chan! We were trying to find your plu-Mmmhnm!!" tried to explain the young boy but he was met with the same fate his sister had short seconds prior.

"Hide and seek. *Right* ?" cut off Bakugou once again, pressing hard on some of his words as a threatening warning. He only released the two

siblings when they awkwardly nodded their heads in acknowledgement - luckily, the two snotty brats weren't stupid so they quickly concluded that going along with Bakugou was the right choice to make. With a small hmph, he removed his hands from their mouths and adjusted his sitting position.

"I got you some food from the stalls outside," said Todoroki, pulling a chair closer to Bakugou until it was nearly glued to him and readily took a seat on it. He placed a small plastic bag on the table in front of him, never breaking eye contact with the two siblings hovering around Bakugou's back. *I don't like them.*

I don't like him, inwardly mumbled the young siblings in perfect syntony, cautiously gazing at the student who was invading their and Bakugou's table without permission.

"Sweet! I'm starving," confessed Bakugou, promptly digging in the small paper box of takoyaki and the canned juice in the bag. "What about you?"

"I ate some cold soba in the canteen while they were collecting the ingredients from the kitchen," said Todoroki, offering a thumbs up at Bakugou. He then tilted his head just the slightest. "I also bumped into my brother and sister there so I used the chance to tell them about the new ticket system, just in case they want to come by later."

"Yeah," acknowledged Bakugou in a non-committal manner, leisurely picking up the toothpick inside of the bag. The duo who had asked him for directions while he was taking the sibling brats to the TDL really must have been Todoroki's older siblings, then. Genes were truly a scary thing. He popped one of the takoyaki balls into his mouth and his red eyes went round in surprise right away. "Shit, these are fuckin' amazing! What the hell? Where did you get these?"

“The 3rd years’ food stalls next to the canteen,” explained Todoroki, a small smile curling up the corner of his lips as he lovingly gazed at the starving beast devouring the takoyaki. “It seems they create a new random takoyaki flavour every school festival and they went for spicy this year. The end result was a bit too spicy, though, so they had absolutely no customers lining up for their stall. I thought it would be right up your alley.”

“Damn straight it is!” said Bakugou, finishing his light meal way too fast. He leaned on his seat’s backrest and crossed his arms over his chest. He softly mumbled, “I could probably mimic this recipe… No, I’d tone up the spicy even more…”

“Gou-chan, do you like takoyaki?” inquired the young girl, leisurely leaning her upper body over Bakugou’s legs while excitedly peering up at him. “Is it your favourite food?”

“They’re okay, I guess,” mumbled Bakugou, his brain still too focused on the spicy takoyaki to take much notice of the two siblings and their slow, awkward ascend to his lap. His chin was suddenly grabbed and pulled sideways. “...Huh?”

“Bakugou, at this rate, you’re really going to be jumped in the middle of the table’s area,” warned Todoroki, his face not even half an inch away from Bakugou’s puzzled expression.

“...Huh!?” yelped Bakugou, his cheekbones getting dyed in bright red. He slapped Todoroki’s hand away and averted his gaze by looking downwards. A vein promptly popped out on his forehead at catching two sneaky little brats red-handed. “Hey, what the hell are you two up to this time!? Didn’t I tell you to stay put!?”

“Awww~” whimpered the siblings in unison, their upper bodies sliding down from Bakugou’s leg. They readily threw the stink eye at

Todoroki while grudgingly mumbling to themselves, “Meanie…”

“Hmph.” Todoroki simply lifted his expressionless eyes from the two kids and went back to showering Bakugou with attention for whatever little time they had left from their unprogrammed break. Almost everyone had rested and eaten lunch, and the new ticket system had been already put on motion so it was only a matter of time for class 1-A’s café booth to be open to the public for the afternoon half of the school festival. Todoroki quickly checked the time on his cellphone. “You said it was only one hour of babysitting, right?”

“Yeah, the negligent ‘big sis’ should be arriving right about now,” noted Bakugou, sneaking a small peek at Todoroki’s cellphone too. He readily retreated, however, just in case his horny boyfriend misunderstood his actions. Sure enough, some more of his classmates arrived at the classroom a few minutes later, together with an upperclassman. Bakugou snorted, “Speaking of the devil…”

“Big sis!!!” excitedly yelped the young siblings, running at the speed of light towards the 2nd year student meekly bowing her head at Bakugou and all of his classmates. The two of them tenderly hugged her, with the young boy energetically jumping up and down while inquiring, “Are you done with the exhibition? Are you going to walk around the school festival with us now?”

“Yeah, I am,” acknowledged the 2nd year student, lovingly ruffling her younger siblings’ heads. “Have you eaten lunch already? Or will you eat with me now?”

“Gou-chan gave us food,” said the young girl, pointing towards Bakugou. “It was really good! But we can eat more sweets with you, don’t worry, big sis.”

“Exactly so fork over the money,” scoffed Bakugou, pointing with his

thumb towards Yaoyorozu in turn. “You can empty your wallet with her.”

“Y-Yes…” mumbled the 2nd year student with a stuttering voice, her shoulders slumping down slightly as she walked over to the (barely) armour-clad student Bakugou had alluded to. Luckily for her, Yaoyorozu was far from scary and frightening, especially when compared to the ferocious number one freshman.

“Gou-chan, Gou-chan,” called the young girl, giving a couple of tugs to Bakugou’s red mantle. When Bakugou barked a ‘what do you want now?’ at her, she smiled from ear to ear at him. “When I get bigger, big enough to ride a rollercoaster and walk alone in a school festival, I’m gonna marry you, Gou-chan! It’s a promise, okay?”

“Ah! You’re so unfair!” yelped the young boy, crossing his arms over his chest while puffing out his cheeks in a pout. “I want to marry Gou-chan too!”

“What a heartbreaker you are, ‘Gou-chan’～” sneakered Kaminari, half of the classroom experiencing yet another laughing attack (though a very restrained one, to not offend either of the children).

I knew it…, inwardly sighed Todoroki, his deadpan expression becoming even more expressionless and blank as he closely eyed the two siblings and their puppy love target. He was about to open his mouth to crush their hopes and future promises with a possibly extremely childish remark to someone of his age but he was beaten to it by Bakugou himself.

“Nice try but you’re way too late for that,” snorted Bakugou, dropping his hands on top of the siblings’ heads and strongly ruffling their hair until it became an utter bird’s nest. “The prince over here beat you to that game already. So attack them super fast next time, ‘kay? To the

point they can never, *ever* escape from you again, hehehe! Now beat it. Go nag your sister or she might get lonely to the point of crying."

"Okay!" acknowledged the two siblings with a cheerful nod of their dishevelled heads. They turned towards the flabbergasted prince sitting next to Bakugou and stuck their tongues out at him, before darting to their older sister's protection.

"Todoroki, you should run away before it's too late," advised Tokoyami, wholeheartedly hoping that those two children would grow up to become respectful, law-abiding adults, not ones bordering a court restriction towards their own lover.

"There's no way I can run away," sighed Todoroki, half-hiding the light pink on his cheeks with his hand. Some might interpret his words as a confession to his impossibility to escape the ferocious beast's clutches but that couldn't be farther away from the truth. He was a willing prisoner, someone who had gladly offered whatever Bakugou demanded from him. Bakugou also easily did the same, something that plenty of their classmates still didn't seem to be aware of. After all, Bakugou was the 'usurper' who did whatever he wanted, whenever he wanted - who would believe Todoroki if he told them half of the things Bakugou did for him without even being asked to? Probably only a handful of their acquaintances. He sighed once again, this time inwardly. *I feel that I fall in love with him all over again every time he says or does something.*

"Hey, Kirishima, Dunce Face! If you're done with your lunch, then it's time for you to haul ass back to the kitchen area!" barked Bakugou, leaning his back on his seat while putting his feet on top of the table. He snobbishly shooed both Kirishima and Kaminari away from their seats. "If I'm forced to go help you guys a single time because you can't keep up with the new slowpoke pace, I swear I'm making meat pie out of your minced bodies!!"

...*Almost every time he says or does something,* deadpanned Todoroki in

the back of his mind, a soft smile nevertheless slipping into his lips.

-.-

The afternoon shift restarted with no problems, no insane lines filling the entirety of the corridor and with neither of the two teams nearing breaking point at all times. Class 1-A's café booth returned to its initial relaxing pace, even though it had become one of the top 3 conversational topics for both students and visitors alike.

I'm so glad things calmed down, inwardly sighed Midoriya, a smile on his face as he waved goodbye at yet another small group of customers that had sat at one of his assigned tables and welcomed the following ones. *Kacchan's right with what he said. We didn't plan the customer service as much as we should have and instead only focused on how to appeal to and entertain the public… Good thing we managed to make a comeback.*

Things were truly running smoothly now that they knew at all times how many customers they would have at all moments, as well as no longer having the pressure of endless lines riding in the back of their minds. The service industry wasn't something to be taken lightly and the entire class had learned that lesson the hard way.

I guess my only worry now is Kacchan… He's not exactly waiter material, inwardly cringed Midoriya, slowly turning his gaze towards the 'haunted throne' (or at least that's what everyone started calling Todoroki's seat after Bakugou decided to make it his new fortress). Bakugou's presence in the table area wasn't something they had planned for so from the moment the usurper made his first appearance, nearly all of their scripts had to be thrown away and replaced with plenty of ad-libs. A monumental amount of ad-libbing, actually, as Todoroki seemed to be cooperating with Bakugou with the least helpful yet way too dangerous method of them all. Midoriya sighed. *Maybe I should keep an eye out on Todoroki-kun too. His denseness can be just as unpredictable and we don't need a second*

customer flood…

"Deku-kun, Deku-kun," called Uraraka in a whisper, tapping on her friend's shoulder a couple of times to break him free from his ongoing mumbling monologue. "I think you have a customer."

"Eh? Ah! Mom!" babbled Midoriya, his head whipping around for brief seconds before his eyes settled on the classroom's door and the woman waiting there.

"Since it was so busy in the morning, I didn't think I would be able to come to see your class's café but good thing I passed by a second time," said Inko, fidgeting just the slightest as she walked into the fantasy-centric room. She gave a motherly smile when her son started dashing towards her at the speed of sound. "That outfit looks really good on you, Izuku. Everyone's outfits are fantastic. You did a really good job with the school festival."

"Hehehe, you think?" meekly laughed Midoriya, awkwardly scratching the back of his head. He then guided her towards one of his empty tables and gave her the menu.

"Hm… Do you have any recommendations?" inquired Inko as she closely scanned the available food options.

"I created that thing so everything's good, for as long as the guys over there are following the recipes correctly," scoffed Bakugou, walking over to the table with his arms crossed over his chest and a big frown on his face. "Hey, Deku. Round Face is about to have a meltdown behind Class Prez so how about you drag her back to your tables? That should be a pretty entertaining show for the usurper to see, hehe…"

"My, I'm surprised you're helping to serve the tables too, Katsuki," gasped Inko, her mouth momentarily getting round-shaped in shock at seeing Bakugou actively working a serving role *and* dressed in such an outfit. "Did you invite Mitsuki-san and Masaru-san to the school festival too?"

"As if!" barked Bakugou, his frowning expression only becoming more accentuated. "School festivals are already a pain in the ass as they are. Why make it even worse with the old hag's nagging? They're way too busy with their jobs for this stupid school event either way so whatever."

"They'd open up their schedules if you invited them, though," chuckled Inko, resuming with the menu choices. "They'd be really happy if you did. Especially Mitsuki-san."

"Sure they would," scoffed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. He turned around on his heels and briefly waved his goodbyes with one hand. "See ya."

"The Bakugou family truly never changes…" softly chuckled Inko once again, finally engaging in more conversation with her son and other serving team's members to get her order all sorted out.

"Damn, I guess you and Midoriya really are childhood friends," noted Sero as Bakugou returned to his stolen throne. He leisurely leaned over one of the throne's armrests and peered down at Bakugou. "You two usually get along so badly, part of me doubted you've been hanging out since children. But turns out it's actually true."

"Why would I lie about the Shitty Nerd?" hissed Bakugou, kicking one of Sero's legs with the heel of his foot. He grumbled, "I wish I was…"

"Are your families on good terms with one another?" inquired Todoroki, also returning to the throne and taking a seat on the other armrest (no kicks or any other violent expulsion acts towards him, fortunately). "Since you're always so cruel with Midoriya, I didn't think you'd get along so well with his mother."

"Can we not talk about that? I'm the usurper right now so keep yapping about that crap and I'll throw you two to the gallows!" roared Bakugou, once again giving a kick to Sero with the heel of his foot to shoo him away.

“What, does it make you feel called out?” snorted Sero with a roll of his eyes. Usurper or not, there really was no changing Bakugou.

“No, it reminds me of every single reason I have to kill that fuckin’ Shitty Nerd the next time he breathes the same air as me,” growled Bakugou, a raging glare on his red eyes while he pinpointed the said ‘shitty nerd’ as he walked towards the temporary kitchen area to place the order. He suddenly felt a gentle caress to the top of his head, fingers lightly ruffling his blonde spiky locks. Bakugou suspiciously peered up at Todoroki. "What?"

"Nothing. I just felt like touching your head," said Todoroki with an expressionless shrug of his shoulders. His hand continued to leisurely ruffle and pat Bakugou's head.

"Yeah? Well, I feel like smashing that stupid head of yours against the window. How do you feel about that, huh!?" is what Bakugou would have answered back a couple of months ago. Now, he simply let Todoroki do whatever he wanted without as much as a complaint and continued to menacingly keep a close watch to the classroom's insides.

Bakugou's threatening levels went down by 25% as Todoroki relished the discreet physical contact with the usurper's head. The excitement

at witnessing such an endearing scene made the customer's excitement skyrocket in contrast.

"Oh, it's time for the next skit," blurted out Todoroki out of the blue, his body jolting straight as he did so. He removed his hand from Bakugou's head and got up from the throne's armrest. But rather than walk up to the remainder of the serving team's members to begin the performance, he leaned slightly downward. His plans were cruelly crushed by the all-mighty usurper himself.

"Don't even think about it…!" hissed Bakugou with a small voice, slapping the palm of his hand over Todoroki's face to tightly grip it and keep it far, far away from him. "There's a *big* difference between acting and freaking flirting in the open like a couple of annoying normies, you opportunistic asshole!"

"But you said I could do whatever I wanted," pointed out Todoroki, tilting his head to the left to the best of his ability. "You get to stay dressed like that in here, I get to keep you all to myself. That was the deal, wasn't it?"

"Yeah but I never said I'd cooperate with your side of the deal, now did I?" said Bakugou, a knowing smirk curling up the corner of his lips. He slackened his hold to Todoroki's face, his fingertips temptingly sliding down his features as he placed his elbow on the now free armrest and leaned the side of his face on his closed fist. Bakugou gestured towards the tables with his other hand, his smirk only becoming more accentuated and mischievous. "Hurry up and go. I'll continue keeping your former seat warm for you. In all sorts of ways."

"Sero, tell them to wait just a minute more," requested Todoroki with a small sigh. He then proceeded with the troublesome chore of picking Bakugou up from the throne and drag his growling, wiggling body all the way to the separate kitchen section.

"O-Okay…?" acknowledged Sero with a certain hesitation, an eyebrow arched as he cautiously observed from a distance the Prince doing the carrying this time around.

And he wasn't the only one. The majority of those present in the table's area were curiously observing the event, the class 1-A students wondering what exactly had Bakugou done this time around to be dragged outside like that and the customers going wild with their thoughts over the fanservice-ish scene.

The classroom was in expectant silence, all eyes turned towards the curtain-clad kitchen entrance. Then the noise began.

"Can you fuckin' learn to keep your hands to yourself for five damned minutes!?"

Then silence once again, though soft, small squeals croaked out of some of the customers' throats. It was followed by the muffled rustling of the curtain and the resurfacing of the usurper and the prince, the former furiously stomping back to the throne and the latter lightly rubbing the bright red slap mark on his face.

All of it within one minute, like Todoroki had promised.

Should we pretend that none of that just happened or should we pretend the skit has already begun?, inwardly cringed the serving crew, Iida going as far as to facepalm his helmet-clad face. There was a collective sigh within the back of their minds. *Probably both…*

As the serving team organised itself to finally begin with the scheduled skit, the classroom's door slowly slid open just a crack. Ojiro peeked inside of the classroom through that gap, calling over Asui once their gazes bumped into one another.

"Have you begun the skit already? More customers with the tickets have arrived," announced Ojiro with a small voice, gesturing towards the two customers waiting by the corridor.

"We were about to begin just now but I think a small delay could come in handy," acknowledged Asui, taking some quick glances at her teammates, then at the overexcited tables and finally to the grumbling usurper actively trying to avoid looking at anyone while sitting on the throne. She lightly adjusted the apron over her skirt and fully opened the door, welcoming and guiding the two newcomers in.

"Hey, Shouto," greeted Natsuo, waving one of his hands at his younger brother. "We came a bit earlier than promised. I hope that's not a problem?"

"No, not really," said Todoroki with his usual expressionless demeanour. "The tables are much more manageable now."

"That's good to hear," sighed Fuyumi in relief. She tilted her head slightly as she sat down on the provided table. "What happened to your face?"

"I accidentally angered the usurper," deadpanned Todoroki, pointing with his thumb at the back of the moody blonde.

"Oh, isn't that the student who gave us some directions earlier, Fuyumi?" noted Natsuo, recognising the fluffy red mantle and the spiky blonde hair. "So you're from the same class. No wonder he knew us. It's really good to know you're getting along just fine with your classmates and making friends, Shouto."

"You mean Bakugou?" inquired Todoroki, peeking over his shoulder in his direction. It sure seemed like Bakugou had a full-on adventure while going around the school grounds advertising for their café booth, from taking care of lost twins and catching rigged prize games red-handed to giving directions to confused visitors. A soft smile momentarily surfaced on his lips but when he turned back to the table, he inadvertently deadpanned, "He's not a friend, he's my boyfriend."

'Collective facepalm' was the only way of describing what the close-by 1-A students experienced when they overheard Todoroki shamelessly announcing his relationship with Bakugou to his siblings. A collective facepalm loud enough to catch the grumbling Bakugou by surprise and force him to finally look at the tables once again, an eyebrow slightly arched as he wondered what the hell was wrong with their brains now.

Todoroki-kun should never, ever be left to his own devices whenever Kacchan is concerned, inwardly sobbed Midoriya, sideways glancing at the two young adults with a certain hesitation as he waited for the follow-up reaction. Hopefully, a good one, like it had happened with him and the rest of their class.

"Eh…?" interjected Fuyumi and Natsuo at the same time, gawking at their youngest sibling while wondering if they had misheard something or if that sentence had truly just exited his mouth.

"But I wonder how he knew who you are?" inquired Todoroki, completely unaware of Fuyumi and Natsuo's flabbergasted semblances. "I never showed him a photo of you and we rarely talk about our families. Do you think we look alike, Midoriya?"

"Eh!? Ah…! Um… Maybe… There should be some resemblances…?" babbled Midoriya, so baffled at being suddenly added to the conversation that he could hardly speak properly. He felt a shudder crawl up his spine as a war-like scenario started being screened deep

inside of his mind. *Please don't involve me in this, Todoroki-kun…! Kacchan might actually kill me for real this time, even though I have absolutely nothing to do with what you just told your brother and sister!*

"I guess that's true," acknowledged Todoroki with a small shrug. He passed over the menu to his frozen in place older brother. "Let me know when you decide on what you want to order."

"W-Wait! You can't just randomly change the topic like that after dropping such a massive bomb on us!" yelped Natsuo, pushing the menu back to Todoroki.

"Did I say something wrong?" asked Todoroki, tilting his head once again as he thought more closely about their conversation. Only then did a blank realising expression popped up on his face. "Oh, the thing about Bakugou. We've been dating for over a month now. I'm scheduled to participate in the next skit so could you wait a bit?"

"That's hardly something that should be discussed in the middle of a school festival, don't you think?" sighed Fuyumi, suppressing a roll with her eyes. "How long will it be until your punishment ends?"

"Today's the last day," said Todoroki. "I was planning to visit mom tomorrow since she asked me to go there in her last letter."

"I was planning on going there tomorrow too so let's talk then," said Fuyumi, all smiles to her younger brother as she took the menu to herself. "Don't worry about our order, go do your skit. Your classmates are waiting, right?"

"Okay," acknowledged Todoroki with a small nod of his head. He then departed from the table to join the rest of the skit's cast.

"Geez… I don't even know if I'm more surprised about him having a boyfriend or at how randomly he dropped the news on us," sighed Natsuo, tiredly leaning his back on his seat while he crossed his arms over his chest. He sighed once again. "That's Shouto for you, I guess…"

"I just hope he doesn't do the same thing with mom," said Fuyumi, leisurely reading the menu to figure out which was the lightest set to eat after the glorious banquet they had in the canteen. "She already has plenty to worry about. Mom doesn't need to know how hopelessly dense her youngest child is. She might blame herself for it."

"Hmm, that's true," acknowledged Natsuo with a couple of nods. He switched his gaze to the throne-like seat where his younger brother's boyfriend was silently sitting at. "Still, since he can be so dense at times, I'm surprised he's dating someone. I thought Shouto was the type that stayed oblivious to emotions and such. Guess he's already old enough to not be *that* dense. ...He is, right? He's not mistaking close friendship with love, right?"

"I highly doubt he is," pointed out Fuyumi, passing the menu to her brother after she made up her mind on the order. "Shouto is probably quite cautious when it comes to romantic relationships. He would never date someone if he wasn't sure of his own feelings."

"Oh. Right," said Natsuo, accepting the menu once again. They had all grown up in a household without pure, unadulterated love between their parents so it went without saying that such had left a gash in their views of love and relationships. Especially when it came to their youngest brother, who had taken all of the brunt of their father's obsession with the number one spot and had become a pivotal point for their mother's destructive emotional breakdown. He pondered for a while. "Should we tell Shouto to take his boyfriend with him too?"

"Isn't it a bit too soon for that?" chuckled Fuyumi, considerably

amused by that suggestion. If her youngest little brother was the definition of denseness, then her oldest little brother was the definition of easygoing. "Let's wait a few months and then invite them out for lunch during their day off from school."

"Sure~"

Chapter 46

"And it's finally over…" sighed class 1-A in relief, their tired bodies scattered through the classroom they had just finished sorting out back to normal.

The sun was beginning to set and from outside could be heard the last embers of U.A. school festival softly burning out. The visitors had already left the school grounds so the remaining festivities and cheerful bustling were all on the students and school staff.

The students from the hero course also wanted to join in on the fun so they tried to hurry up their café booth's closing. But surviving Bakugou's explosive self-invitation to the serving team (without any actual serving), ad-libbing the entire afternoon shift, trying to prevent Todoroki's denseness from killing someone (in several senses of the word) and then witnessing an entire economy class being wrecked for rigging their stall… would they really be able to enjoy the closing of the school festival to its fullest?

"Alright, time to grab ourselves some dinner!" announced Kirishima, crashing his hardened fists together as he got up from the floor. "Who wants to go invade the food stalls by the canteen?"

"I'm in!" cheerfully said Kaminari, his energy renewed with the prospect of food. He walked up to Kirishima, placed his arm over his shoulder and waited for more to join in.

"Speaking of food, what should we do with the remaining apple pie slices and menchi katsu sandwiches?" inquired Satou, his arms crossed over his chest and head tilted to the left as he wondered about that unresolved problem.

"Why don't we take them with us to the canteen and give them to whoever is interested in trying them?" suggested Iida, his head and body finally visible now that he removed the whole upper part of his armour. "We shouldn't let freshly prepared food go to waste."

"Oh! That sounds like a great idea!" acknowledged Uraraka with a vigorous nod of her head. "The food was great but I don't want to send the rest of the weekend eating the same thing."

"Maybe some stalls will have the same idea and give away their remaining products," said Ashido, her energy also starting to soar high now that there was a concrete plan delineated for them. "And if they haven't, they might change their minds at the prospect of trying Gou-chan's handcrafted menu~!"

"Shut up with that name already!" growled Bakugou, a furious frown on his features as he glared daggers at Ashido and his chuckling classmates. His new nickname would probably take a while to fade away and nothing annoyed him more than that. One stupid nickname per life was more than enough, thank you very much.

"Can I keep some of the apple pie slices?" asked Tokoyami while eyeing one of the food containers with the pie slices. Some of his classmates might be sick of the menu, after so many taste tests and cooking sessions, but he would be more than glad to keep eating that heavenly apple pie.

"I don't see why not," said Ojiro with a shrug. He grabbed some of the boxes with his hands and balanced a couple more on his tail. "I might just eat some more myself once we get to the canteen."

"Hah! I second you on that!" laughed Kaminari, sliding the classroom's door open to lead their excursion towards the canteen. Most of them were still dressed in their fantasy-themed outfits so, rather than an

excursion, they looked like a small parade as they exited the classroom one by one or in pairs.

"You can't go yet." Bakugou's grumbling voice was accompanied by a tug to the collar of Todoroki's prince outfit. The rest of the class changed locations but the two of them stayed behind in the classroom.

"Is something wrong?" inquired Todoroki, turning around to face Bakugou once he felt the grip on the back of his collar disappear. Rather than meet his lover, his face was suddenly assaulted by a grey fluffiness that smothered him into a deadpan expression. When he pulled the soft object from his face, Todoroki was left at a lack of words. "....."

"Disappointed that your reward is just that ugly thing?" scoffed Bakugou, crossing his arms over his chest while averting Todoroki's silent gaze.

"It's the same koala plush toy from the dungeon…" breathed out Todoroki, recognising the small plushie as soon as he first glanced at it. He then looked up at Bakugou. "Where did you get it?"

"In that rigged prize game stall…" mumbled Bakugou, turning his head some more to avoid Todoroki's now expectant gaze. But, as usual, he ended up caving in. Bakugou clicked his tongue in annoyance and looked him straight in the eyes while frowning like a demon. "This is why I told you that whole thing was all your fault! If you weren't so scatterbrained and hadn't let yourself be fooled by those idiots into dressing like that, I wouldn't have been forced to dress like this either! And I wouldn't be going around the school advertising our stupid café! Which means I wouldn't have bumped into that ugly creature in the prize game stall without my wallet and then get involved with those annoying twins as a result! It was all your damned fault! Aaargh! Just take the fuckin' plushie already and go join the others in the-"

"Thanks, Bakugou," interrupted Todoroki, tightly hugging Bakugou's half-naked torso while holding onto the plush toy with one of his hands. A small smile was present on his lips as he rested his chin over the fluffy white portion of Bakugou's mantle. "This was the perfect reward. I'll be sure to take good care of my koala for the rest of my life. Oh. And by 'my koala', I meant you, not the plush toy. I also won't let it disappear like it happened with the first one, though."

"I don't need your bluntness right now…!" hissed Bakugou, pushing and grinding his closed fist on the side of Todoroki's torso. Was it really possible for a human to feel their face burning and sizzling this much or was Bakugou experiencing some kind of malfunction? He released a small sigh, hoping that such would help his head cool down a bit. "C'mon, let go now! Those guys will start going crazy if we're away on our own for too long."

"Just a bit more," requested Todoroki, his smile growing slightly more - this might be the first time he felt this happy for receiving a gift. His birthday was still a few months away and that day wasn't even one where anything was celebrated, much less a special day for either him or Bakugou. And it went without saying that there was nothing that obligated Bakugou into buying the koala plush toy just because it was there. He could have simply ignored it, especially with how much he seemed to dislike it. Todoroki turned his head slightly and gently kissed his cheek. "I love you, Bakugou."

"……you love me only 'cause I got your plushie back…?" mumbled Bakugou, sideways peering at Todoroki with his cheeks adorably puffed out and lips pursed into a pout.

He's so cute , inwardly gushed Todoroki, his body radiating happiness as he hugged Bakugou even more tightly. He deadpanned nevertheless, "I thought you didn't want me to be too blunt right now?"

"Shut up…" grumbled Bakugou, twisting his nose just the slightest at his accidental blunder. "Do you or do you not?"

"If I said yes, you'd kill me, wouldn't you?" deadpanned Todoroki, finding it funny how Bakugou's face went from 'bashful frowning' to 'deadly frowning' almost instantly. He quickly backtracked his words before the ferocious beast offed him with an explosion or worse. "I was just kidding. With or without koala plush toys, you're the cutest in the world, Bakugou."

"That has nothing to do with love, you asshole!" hissed Bakugou, once again pressing and grinding his fist on Todoroki's torso. "Are you going to dump me once you find someone even cuter, is that it? Huh!? Go on! I dare you to say yes to that one, you jerk!"

"You're so cute when you're jealous," chuckled Todoroki, pushing his body slightly sideways to pull back from Bakugou's painful torture method. He better keep himself and his words in check now or things could get quite dangerous for them. Todoroki released a small sigh and dropped his head on Bakugou's fluffy shoulder. "Sorry."

"You're sorry about what!?" roared Bakugou, furiously turning his head to try to see what Todoroki's current expression was. Before he could succeed on his task, however, his body was slowly pushed and pushed, one step at a time, until his lower back bumped into the closest desk. "Huh? Eh? Huh?"

"I've held back the whole day, I'm at my limit," confessed Todoroki, his cheekbones smeared with a light shade of pink as he directed his hungry gaze back to Bakugou. His hands smoothly slid down his lover's toned torso until his hips, using the opportunity to pull their lower halves together and show Bakugou how much of a pinch he was in right now.

"I knew you wouldn't be able to last that long without trying to jump me at least once or twice," snorted Bakugou, mischievously smirking at Todoroki while glancing down at his hard-on. "Wanna skip the canteen and go back straight to the dorm?"

"It'd be really bad if I said no to that," said Todoroki, leaning forward for a long, sweet kiss. He shouldn't have, though, as it made him even more starved for Bakugou and much, much keener into throwing away any thoughts on time and place. At this rate, would he even be able to get back to the dorm before stripping the little clothes Bakugou had on? Highly doubtful. Todoroki softly broke their kiss and wiped Bakugou's moist lips with his thumb, a small sigh escaping his throat as he said, "Better stop now or we'll get in trouble again."

"Hah! Says the one who dragged me to the separate kitchen area for a one-minute makeout session during business hours," snorted Bakugou, leisurely placing his arms over Todoroki's shoulders. "Are you that into kissing in front of an audience?"

"I’m not. That was all on you," accused Todoroki, a small pout showing on his features. "You made the afternoon shift absolutely unbearable. Do you really hate this outfit that much? I don't think it's that bad, considering what it is for. You don’t think it suits me?"

"It's terrible. Absolutely godawful. So let's hurry back to the dorm and get that thing off of you, yeah?" said Bakugou, his arms snaking around Todoroki's neck and back more closely. "Between that prince outfit and no outfit at all, I prefer you butt-naked."

"But I can't walk around the school festival completely naked, Bakugou. That would be against the law," pointed out Todoroki, a dead serious expression on his face. He then finally understood what Bakugou meant by that - or, at least, he thought he did. "Oh. You mean like that king character from 'The Emperor's New Clothes' tale?"

"...This is why I don't flirt with you as much as you'd like me to, you dense idiot…" groaned Bakugou, his head dropping down in utter dismay. Was it even possible to fail to take a hint with the kind of mood they had going?

Todoroki's lost semblance told Bakugou that yes, it was possible to fail to take a hint even after a bed invitation had been put out in the open already.

Chapter 47

They hurriedly closed the front door behind themselves, bodies tangled in a close embrace and lips and tongues stuck in a biting kiss.

"Haa…! Can you at least keep it in your pants until we get to our room?" asked Bakugou, dropping his head backwards to force himself to rip their lips apart. They took their shoes off in a rush, their bodies never truly halting the touching in some sort of way.

"Just be glad I could last until here," said Todoroki, immediately glueing himself to Bakugou's embrace as they walked towards the elevator. He pressed the elevator's button while caging his lover between the closed metallic door and his body, putting his mouth to better use than words yet again.

"Don't think you're the only one holding back," whispered back Bakugou in between hungry kisses. If Todoroki hadn't been holding him so closely, he would have fallen backwards when the door slid open. They slipped into the elevator promptly, too busy with themselves to consider much more than reach one of their rooms as fast as possible. Bakugou quickly slapped the elevator's button while mischievously purring, "I meant it when I said I want you naked."

"You're halfway there yourself," pointed out Todoroki, his lips shadowing Bakugou's smirk. His hands slid down Bakugou's naked back until his fingers slipped inside his pants and underwear, thigh teasingly rubbing against his aroused length. Todoroki greedily swallowed the small moans that escaped Bakugou's lips with a slow, lavish kiss throughout the remainder of the elevator trip.

They could hardly hear the bell-like ring of the elevator stopping over the sound of their passionate kisses and heavy breathing, but they easily noticed the door sliding open next to them. Their ongoing

making out session didn't stop them from reaching Bakugou's bedroom with record-breaking speed.

"You really are too underdressed," said Todoroki, his voice coming out as a slightly annoyed yet heavily excited growl. His hands easily caused Bakugou's red mantle to fall on the bedroom's floor, his pants soon slipping down his legs as they navigated towards the bed. With just two pieces of clothing removed, Bakugou was pretty much down to his underwear only (plus whatever usurper accessories he hadn't yanked off on his own yet).

"And you're too overdressed," scoffed Bakugou, grabbing two handfuls of Todoroki's prince outfit and strongly yanking it in opposite directions. The sound of fabric ripping apart was followed by two bodies falling on the mattress. Bakugou victoriously gazed at the now half-destroyed rags clothing Todoroki's bare torso, unconsciously licking his lips at the sight. "This look suits you much better."

"As expected of a tyrannical usurper," deadpanned Todoroki, expressionlessly staring at the satisfied look on Bakugou's face as he pulled the rest of the ripped clothes off of his upper body and sent them flying to the other side of the room.

"What? Got a problem with it?" grumbled Bakugou, a small frown creasing his brows. Even if Todoroki wasn't there to hear it, he had sworn to himself he'd personally rip that stupid outfit as soon as he could. And now was the perfect 'as soon as he could'.

"No, not really," said Todoroki, inwardly chuckling at his lover's frown. He leaned forward to taste some more of those pouting lips, his tongue easily being granted access deeper inside of the starving mouth. His hands roamed free on Bakugou's torso, only to stop above his supple pecs and the rosy nipples standing erect in their midst. Todoroki had spent more than half of the day staring and glancing at Bakugou’s half-naked upper body, it was an understatement to say he was starving to touch it.

"Ngh! Ah… Haa…" softly gasped Bakugou, his body flinching briefly with the sudden gentle pinch on his nipples. He could feel his body quivering in expectation as Todoroki's feverish tongue lapped down his chin, his neck, his collarbone until it reached the same level as his hands. A bright red blush overtook Bakugou's entire face when Todoroki took one of his nipples in his mouth and mercilessly sucked and nibbled on it, the other one not left forgotten but leisurely played with by his fingers. Bakugou dropped his head on his pillow, more moans getting stuck on his throat but unable to be voiced out by the non-stop shuddering of his body and his own stubbornness. "Ngh! Idio- Haa…! Todoro- Ngh… Wait…!"

"It doesn't feel good?" inquired Todoroki, Bakugou's hardened nipple still caged in between his lips and teeth as he peered up at him. By the look on his face and his body's reactions, Todoroki concluded it was the opposite of not feeling good and resumed his sensual ministrations on Bakugou's chest area.

"That's not- Ahh…!" grumbled Bakugou, his complaint interrupted by a runaway moan. Of course it felt good and that was exactly the problem. He didn't doubt that Todoroki's foreplay could get him to climax without even touching his cock once. Though they occasionally got frisky with each other whenever in the mood, they had only gone all the way that one time - and Bakugou was *not* going to come from his nipples only after having sex with his boyfriend once. He would not! He grabbed Todoroki's head and pulled his mouth away from his chest, feeling his face heat up even more at the sight of the thin string of saliva still connecting Todoroki's moist lips to his nipple. Maybe it wouldn't be that bad to come from foreplay on his chest only, Bakugou briefly thought, but he readily pushed the idea away while he led Todoroki's face closer to his. Tonight wouldn't be the night Todoroki got that achievement, that was for sure. "Enough with my chest already. There are better places for you to touch…"

'And you know where they are' were the words Bakugou left unspoken as his hand reached out to his underwear and lightly tugged the elastic band down his hips with his thumbs.

"No, thank you," deadpanned Todoroki, wiggling his head out of Bakugou's one-handed grasp to hunt down those appetising nipples once again. He went for the other bud this time, showering it with some tongue action before he put the same suckling and nibbling strategy into motion.

"Ahh! Ngh… You damned stubborn jerk…!" hissed Bakugou, suppressing his moans by strongly kicking the bed with the heels of his feet. He grabbed Todoroki by the shoulders but the pleasurable rush coursing down his spine made his strength fade into a light touch. "Are you having a baby phase now!? Ahh… Leave my… haa… nipples alone… Ngh… Shit…!"

"You should think twice next time before walking around the whole day half-naked in front of everybody, then," said Todoroki, pressing down his teeth on the hardened tip. The loud moan that escaped Bakugou's mouth made his body shudder with arousal. Though he would have liked to continue teasing Bakugou some more, he wasn't an expert in the restraint department, much less with his lover slowly mellowing into goo with each of his touches, licks, bites and suckles. He pulled his hand from Bakugou's chest and touched his hardened length through the wet fabric of his underwear. Never breaking eye contact, Todoroki steadily rubbed his hard-on while licking and biting his nipple. "Better, Bakugou?"

"Ahh! I'm… going to kill you… haa… afterwards…!" hissed Bakugou, his threatening words and breathing rhythm in shambles. So he said, but the most he'd do is yell at Todoroki, maybe kick and punch him a couple of times before forgetting the whole incident in a matter of minutes. But definitely not now, though. He was already on the verge of coming, for as annoyed as that made him feel. His restraint crumbled down completely when Todoroki finally slipped his hand inside of his underwear and touched his cock directly. "Ngh…! Todoroki… Ahhh!"

A mind-numbing orgasm later and Bakugou was sprawled motionless

on the mattress, his ribcage heaving heavily while his dazed red eyes stayed on Todoroki.

"Can you reach for the lube, Bakugou?" asked Todoroki, gently kissing his lover's forehead before he began sliding his underwear down his sweaty thighs.

"Nn…" With just that vague small nod of his head, Bakugou rolled his body on the bed to reach out… nowhere with his hand. That small brief pause gave his brain enough time to get out of his lovestruck daze and return to his usual huffy puffy self. "Hey! You know perfectly well you're holding all of the lube and condoms hostage in your room…!"

"Oh. I forgot about that," said Todoroki, also halting momentarily before he dropped Bakugou's underwear on the floor.

"Argh…" groaned Bakugou, his face flopping down against his pillow. He grudgingly mumbled to himself. "I'm so gonna stock up my room with that shit once I go shopping… Damn it…! Hurry up and go get them from your- Hiiii!"

A surprised yelp startled out of Bakugou when his butt was suddenly grabbed and a soft, ticklish wet strip slid over his hole. He could easily recognise what that wet strip was, as it had been licking his nipples just short moments ago.

"Wha- You- Don't-" stammered Bakugou, body frozen in place while his brain short-circuited, crashing down slightly more every time Todoroki wetted his tight back entrance directly with his mouth and tongue. When he managed to whip his head sideways and glance over his shoulder at Todoroki, his face was redder than a stop sign. "A-A-Are you trying to kill me…!?"

"We have no lube and I can't stop and go to my room right now so…" pointed out Todoroki, shifting his position on the bed just the slightest so he could perk up Bakugou's butt higher in the air for easier access purposes. Before he spread him open with his hands and wetted his hole with his tongue some more, Todoroki added, "We saw it in one of the porn videos, right?"

"Ngh…! Porn has nothing to do with reality, you moron!" yelped Bakugou, his body tingling and shuddering with each lick to his bottom. Todoroki sure was keen on turning him into an embarrassed trainwreck that night. "Ahh… You should… use some other stuff… ngh… instead… you idiot…"

"You seem to enjoy it just as much, though," pointed out Todoroki after briefly parting his lips from the twitchy entrance. Though his saliva was running down to his groin, there was also pre-come dribbling from the tip of Bakugou's erect cock when Todoroki slid his fingers against its length. Bakugou's words were never 100% honest but his body sure was.

"I'm about to die here…!" hissed Bakugou, his hands desperately clawing at his bedsheets out of pure embarrassment. "Who cares if it feels… haa… good or not? I'll die either way…! Ngh… Ahh!"

This might be the first time I see him panicking this much, inwardly chuckled Todoroki, probing the tight entrance with his finger and gently stretching it open. If Bakugou truly hated it or didn't want to do it, he'd have put a stop to it by now with his usual violent interventions. The lack of such told Todoroki that all of his complaints were just Bakugou's awkward way of dealing with his bashfulness, not an actual refusal.

"Ahh! Todoroki… Ngh…" moaned Bakugou as soon as Todoroki pushed his fingers deeper inside of him. He couldn't tell if his face was

feeling feverish hot because he was hiding it against the pillow and bedsheets or if he was hiding it there because the thought of blushing like a tomato while having his ass licked and fingered made him want to suffocate himself. At least he could also muffle his louder and louder moans, the only possible good outcome of that position. ...Okay, the second good outcome of that position - Bakugou could deny it all he wanted but it did feel *good* in ways that their usual stretching routine didn't. So much so that Bakugou wanted it done and over with as soon as possible so he could have something other than fingers or his tongue in him. "Ahh… Todoroki… enough… haa… hurry up…!"

"Haa… Don't rush me," warned Todoroki, the small peek he managed to get from Bakugou's aroused expression pushing him over the edge a bit more. He was already turned on as it was and they didn't have the usual items with them; Bakugou couldn't afford to stir him up even more when just regular sex would get him walking like an unsteady toddler the next day. Todoroki didn't want to make it even harder on him by carelessly rushing the procedure.

"Haa… If I tell you to hurry it up… Ngh… then you hurry the hell up…!" hissed Bakugou, that one-liner irking him enough to force him to fully lift his face from its hiding place and howl back at him. "A bit of pain… ngh… is better than… haa… waiting like this… Ah… Just fuck me already, will ya?"

"Don't complain about it afterwards," said Todoroki, his whispering voice husky from arousal. He grabbed Bakugou's waist and pushed his way into the tight hole, the tip of his cock slowly opening his insides further as it slid all the way in. It was still too tight for more movement than that but not tight enough for excruciating pain, to both him or Bakugou, it seemed. "Ngh…! Haa…"

"Ahhh…! Ugh…" moaned Bakugou, a small whimper briefly shadowing the rapture in his voice. Then it was just a matter of catching his breath now because he wouldn't have a second chance to as soon as Todoroki started putting his hips to good use. He could feel the tears dripping down his sweaty features and was about to wipe

them against his pillow, but a hand made him halt.

"Does it… hurt too much?" asked Todoroki, his chest nearly glued to Bakugou's back as he leaned closer to him and gently caressed his cheek with his thumb. As always, Bakugou could try to deceive him with his words but his body was always in accordance with the truth.

"Heh… I've gotten used to you shoving things in me in one go already…" scoffed Bakugou, peeking over his shoulder at Todoroki's aroused features. That mixture of bottomless concern and bottled lust he would get in his face at times like these made it worth it for Bakugou to endure this little momentary discomfort. He simply loved it when that annoying expressionless demeanour of his melted away. It gave him an indescribable feeling of gratification and superiority, what could he do? Pity he couldn't see it that well from that position. He craned his head slightly more and gave a rushed peck to his lover's lips, followed by a small teasing lick. "So don't leave me hanging for too long, Todoroki…"

"You're getting too good at stirring me up," deadpanned Todoroki, which was followed up by some of Bakugou's mischievous giggles. He placed a couple of butterfly kisses on the nape of his neck, his fingers slowly caressing Bakugou's inner thigh as his hand climbed back to his hips. It was so easy to get lost in Bakugou's strong but soft, sturdy yet slender body, he had to wonder how he hadn't been swallowed whole by it yet. Because it sure was hard to let go once you got to have a taste of the rush, the pleasure that came with it.

"Ahh! Haa… Ahhh…" mewled Bakugou, back arching as Todoroki's thrusts hit him just in the right spot - that made any and all remaining pain from the tightness fade into an electrifying current tingling through his body. The more he moved, the easier it got to move and the more intense that electrifying feeling got. As he rocked his hips in tandem with Todoroki's thrusting motions, Bakugou took one of his hands from the mattress and placed it over Todoroki's. Since there was that one thing missing, this was hardly enough to fully satisfy him and he intended to make himself be heard for it. "Ahhh… Todoroki, ngh… Not enough… Ahhhh!"

"Seriously, stop trying to stir me up, Bakugou," groaned Todoroki, his thrusting pace becoming faster and more erratic. He grabbed Bakugou's cock and jerked it at the same rhythm their hips were going at. The way he was being so easily instigated, neither of them would be able to last that long.

"Ahh! I'll stop… haa… once you give… me what I… Ahhh…!" managed to say Bakugou in between moans and pants but more than that was impossible. With both the front and the back being handled at the same time, it was simply impossible to keep his head clear enough to talk. More so when Todoroki had gotten to know how to best handle them. "Ngh…! Ahh! Todoroki… Haa… I'm- Ahhhh!"

"Ngh! Bakugou…" gasped Todoroki, a small frown creasing his brows as Bakugou's hole clenched even more tightly around his cock halfway through his orgasm. He kept thrusting his hips until he also reached his climax, spilling his release into his warm insides. "Ahh… Haa…"

"Ngh…!" Bakugou's arms buckled underneath his and Todoroki's weight, his lungs heaving in the warm air trapped between his face and the bed.

"Sorry… haa… I came inside…" apologised Todoroki, sluggishly lifting his body from on top of Bakugou. A portion of his white, sticky release dribbled down Bakugou's thighs when he pulled out from inside of him. Todoroki tried to push down his hardening erection at the sight of it.

"It's not like I can get pregnant or anything…" mumbled Bakugou under his breath. "Though it's probably going to be a bitch to clean…"

"I'll give you a hand later," announced Todoroki, his eyes sparkling

amidst his expressionless demeanour. He didn't even need to wait a couple of seconds for a hissing comeback to retaliate against his words.

"Don't you start getting more perverted ideas in that horny brain of yours, you horny pervert!" growled Bakugou, sitting up on the bed while accusingly glaring daggers at Todoroki. "I haven't forgotten what you did earlier yet, you opportunistic asshole!"

"But it felt good, ri- Mmhn!" As Todoroki was attempting to appeal for his innocence and explain his earlier sexual ministrations, a surprise kiss sealed his words away. Bakugou's tongue smoothly invaded his mouth, rubbing against his and seeking more of its feel and taste. If he was already in the mood for a second round after seeing the results of their lovemaking, then he was now definitely in the mood for a second and, perhaps, third round after Bakugou's passionate kiss.

"Haa… I couldn't see your face at all, you idiot…" mumbled Bakugou, his lips pursed in a pout as he climbed closer to Todoroki.

That's what you're angry about?, inwardly groaned Todoroki, outwardly only staring blankly at Bakugou while he sulkily nestled up against him. Forget the third round, he could go at it at least five more times, at this point.

"You got to do whatever you wanted already so… haa… now's my turn to fuck you however I want," said Bakugou, mischievously licking his smirking lips. He slowly lowered his hips on top of his lap, his hand guiding Todoroki's renewed erection back inside of him. "Ngh… Ahh…!"

He's too erotic for his own good, inwardly sighed Todoroki in relish. He wrapped one of his arms around Bakugou's lower back to offer him some extra support but his gaze remained solemnly on his face - on

that bewitching expression Bakugou got whenever he was wholeheartedly feeling it. Not the pleasure, though, but that constantly growing emotion shared between them that led them into this type of relationship in the first place. Todoroki gently cupped his flushed cheek with his free hand, bumping their foreheads together until the tips of their noses nearly touched. A small smile gingerly curled up the corner of his lips. "Does it feel that good?"

"Haa… It does," confessed Bakugou in one of his rare bouts of pure honesty. He circled Todoroki's neck with his arms and closed the distance between them to an absolute zero as he leaned in for one more kiss. When he tenderly parted their moist lips, Bakugou rocked his hips downwards, a honey-sweet mewl dripping out of his throat as his unprecedented confession extended for a while longer. "Ahhh! It feels really good when you put it in… Ngh… But when you rub it right here? Haa… That's when it feels fuckin' amazing."

That Todoroki wasn't expecting.

He wasn't expecting a straight answer to his question, he wasn't even expecting any answer at all, just a barked 'shut up and get down to work, you pervert'. Todoroki knew that Bakugou was fonder of closer physical contact after being mellowed a bit with pleasure but that usually only involved how close they stuck to one another or how far they were willing to go on the endless road to degeneracy. It had never breached into the verbal territory.

Was this what happened to Bakugou when he didn't have his prideful barbed wire set all around him?

If after a month of dating, I reached the goal of getting him to admit how good it feels to have sex with me… maybe it'll take me a couple of years to get him to tell me 'I love you' every day, inwardly concluded Todoroki, the nod of his head that unconsciously slipped into reality deeply confusing Bakugou - whose brain was currently far too wired to do the nasty to process the pure.

“Right. Let’s make that the next goal, then,” acknowledged Todoroki to no one in particular, perhaps just to his extremely lucky future self.

“Huh…?” interjected Bakugou, his brows getting even more skewed after hearing Todoroki’s seemingly random and nonsensical words. Before he had the chance to ask him if his IQ had dropped to 0 out of sheer pleasure, his body fell backwards back to the bed. “Eh? Huh?”

“Bakugou, forget about sleeping tonight,” said Todoroki, unabashedly pouncing on his lover. He stole a couple more of deep, passionate kisses out of him before he satisfactorily announced, “But be careful with your voice or Kirishima will also get no sleep once they all get back to the dorm.”

“Huh!? Eh? W-Wait…! Ahhh! Todoro- Ahh… Ngh… Ahhhhhh!”

There certainly was a generalised lack of sleep on the male side of class 1-A’s dorm that night - but that’s something both of them would only find out the following day.

Chapter 48

The mid-morning silence inside the bedroom was suddenly disturbed by the loud ringing of an alarm.

"If you don't shut that thing up… my fist will…" mumbled Bakugou with a sleepy voice, his hands crawling away from Todoroki's body to tug and yank the bedsheets all the way up to his head.

"Nnn…" groaned Todoroki, groping around the bed for his cell phone. He only opened his heterochromatic eyes when he remembered that they were currently in Bakugou's bedroom so his cell phone should be buried underneath the clothes that had been hurriedly undressed the previous night. With a sigh, he sluggishly got up from the bed and walked stark naked to the closest piece of clothing.

Luckily for Bakugou and his thin patience, what Todoroki grabbed was the pants of his prince outfit, the exact location where he had been keeping his cell phone throughout the school festival. In the cell phone's flickering screen could be read the message 'Now you can start thinking about it'.

I got a bit cranky when Bakugou set this alarm up but now…, inwardly said Todoroki, a small smile on his lips as he turned off the alarm. To be fair, Todoroki hadn't forgotten about their conversation about hot springs and trips, but his brain had completely wiped out how Bakugou had messed around with his cell phone the day after said conversation as an answer to his abrupt proposal. *I guess our punishment has truly come to an end now.*

After spending one whole month forbidden from exiting U.A. High School's grounds, both Todoroki and Bakugou were free to go outside whenever they needed, for as long as they followed the appropriate procedure - and didn't use any holes in the security system to obtain

the same result after curfew time.

They could go grocery shopping, they could visit hospitalised family members and, yes, they could go out on dates and, maybe after some persuasion, a short trip somewhere.

The world is Bakugou's and my oyster, declared Todoroki in the back of his mind, his face with a blank excited expressionless to it as he tightly clutched at his cell phone with his hand.

Todoroki continued going through the clothes spread around the floor, picking them up one by one and gathering them over his arm.

"Sorry, you ended up getting caught up in yesterday's rush," apologised Todoroki with a small chuckle. He unburied the koala plush toy from underneath Bakugou's usurper clothes and gently petted its head. As he got back straight up, Todoroki lightly winced in pain. His koala-like boyfriend sure had done a number on his back and shoulders with his nails and teeth. With a sigh, he walked back to the bed. "Bakugou, are you also going to get up or will you continue hibernating underneath the bedsheets?"

"I don't wanna get up… so hurry up and get back here…" mumbled Bakugou, his voice coming out muffled due to his ‘hibernating’ position. One of his hands slowly crawled from underneath the bundle of bedsheets covering him from head to toes and tapped the mattress to invite Todoroki closer.

"I have to go out now," announced Todoroki, placing the clothes on top of the bed so he could put his underwear on. "I planned to go visit my mother with my sister this morning."

A groaning voice was all that could be heard from the bundle of

bedsheets. A couple of seconds later, the small mound quaked lightly and a patch of spiky blonde hair popped out.

"You should have said something yesterday…" said Bakugou, his lips pursed into a pout. When he spotted Todoroki starting to put on the pants of his prince outfit, his hands immediately jumped into motion and yanked the piece of clothing away from him. "You're only dressing this a second time over my cold, dead body!"

"Even if it's just a floor away, I can't go back to my room in just my underwear," deadpanned Todoroki, rolling his eyes around just the slightest as he observed Bakugou hurriedly collecting his clothes and half hiding them underneath the bedsheets with him.

"Then wear my clothes or something," grudgingly grumbled Bakugou, throwing a warning glare at Todoroki in case he was considering the idea of swiping the clothes away from him. "You're not that taller than me. They should fit you just fine."

"Yes, yes," sighed Todoroki, obediently doing as told and giving up on wearing his clothes. He walked up to Bakugou's wardrobe and took a shirt and pair of pants from there, continuing with the conversation while he dressed himself. "I don't think our visit will take that long so I should be back by lunchtime. Do you want me to get anything from the grocery store while I'm out or will you do the shopping yourself whenever you get up? ...Bakugou?"

Since he wasn't getting any answer except deep silence, Todoroki turned back to the bed while putting the shirt on. He bumped into Bakugou fast asleep, his prince outfit underneath his head dubbing as a pillow.

"Eh? Bakugou? Are you sleeping for real?" inquired Todoroki, cautiously walking step by step in the bed's direction. No reaction

whatsoever from Bakugou even when he gently ruffled his hair. He softly pulled and tucked the bedsheets over Bakugou's naked body, a small smile always present on his face. "I guess your brain has finished sorting out everything it needed to."

After delivering a small peck to Bakugou's head and sitting the koala plush toy on top of his nightstand, Todoroki silently exited Bakugou's bedroom and returned to his own.

Half an hour later, he was ready to leave the dorm and begin the travel process to the hospital.

But not before a quick bite in the kitchen area and a few exchanged morning greetings with the classmates rooted to the sofas or dining tables, of course.

"I get that the walls can't be soundproof because of security concerns… but there's a limit to everything, right?" groaned Kirishima, his face buried on his hands as he dejectedly sat down on the sofa, his head hanging down lifelessly. "Not to mention, a villain attack to the dorm has less probability of getting me killed than my neighbour while in a really bad mood…"

"Yeah, getting killed due to overhearing too much would be far too pitiful of a dea- Gah, Todoroki!!" acknowledged Kaminari, nodding his head in agreement while he crossed his arms over his chest. But as soon as he spotted the classmate getting out of the elevator, he jumped against the sofa's backrest with a startle.

"Morning," greeted Todoroki with his usual cool demeanour. He took the small sling backpack loosely hanging on his shoulder and placed it on top of one of the tables while he scavenged through the cupboards for something to chew on before leaving. He could take a quick brunch outside on his way to the hospital. "Good morning to you too,

Midoriya, Iida."

"Y-Yeah, good morning… Todoroki-kun…" greeted back Midoriya with a stutter, his gaze focused downwards on his breakfast like his life depended on it. It most likely did so he continued to slowly munch on his potentially last meal - not that he had that big of an appetite at the moment.

"You… came downstairs alone?" inquired Sero with a certain caution. He closely observed the elevator's door closing on its own and when he glanced towards the stairs, he saw no one else there either. He could breathe easy again then - even if just for now. "So? Is Bakugou still actually alive or did he stay in heaven after you took him there?"

"...? He's still sleeping," said Todoroki, his head slightly tilted as he took a bite on a slice of bread.

"Can't blame him for it," sighed Kaminari, a sympathetic glint on his eyes as he dropped his hands on his lap and flopped his back on the sofa. "I should go back to sleep too… Compensate all the lost hours before they pile up too much or something…"

"Pay me the money you owe me before you do. I'll use it to buy a better set of headphones this afternoon…" groaned Kirishima, his face sinking even further on his hands. "Do you think Jirou would be able to recommend me a model that completely nullifies ambience noise?"

"Tell me the brand and model too if she does," requested Sero, taking two 1,000 yen notes from his wallet and passing them over to Kirishima. "Making a bet out of it once is fun but it'd be torture on the long run."

"Did something happen last night?" asked Todoroki, a metaphorical

question mark floating above his head as he observed the lifeless money exchange happening on the sofa.

"Todoroki-kun… Are you being for real right now?" yelped Midoriya, his chopsticks slipping from his grasp as he robotically craned his head and looked at his friend in utter disbelief. "Like, all jokes aside, do you really mean it?"

"Yeah. I was busy last night," said Todoroki with a small nod. His words erupted a flabbergasting moment of silence inside the entire communal area.

"Okay, guys. Who's going to break the news to him?" inquired Sero, a grave and serious expression on his face as he straightened his sitting position. He exchanged a quick glance with Kirishima and Kaminari, and briefly looked over to Midoriya and Iida before he took a deep breath and said, "We know you were busy last night. That's exactly what happened. That's exactly why Kirishima is 4,000 yen richer right now after winning a bet. What kind of bet, you must be wondering? The correct answer is 'at what time will Todoroki and Bakugou finally stop going at it like bunnies?'"

"I didn't want to win that bet…!" sobbed Kirishima, wallowing even more in despair but accepting nevertheless the fruits of said bet. Those 4,000 yen were a badge of shame he would carry in his mind for the remainder of his life.

"The beast tamer turned out to be a beast himself," said Kaminari with a sigh, grudgingly giving Kirishima his side of the bet. "I'll never underestimate your libido ever again. If you redirect all of that energy to hero practice, you'll be breaking records in no time after graduation. Or beds. Beds too, eventually."

"Oh." That was all Todoroki said as he finally understood what it was

they had been talking about before his arrival. As expected, they might have gone a bit too far last night and, as expected, they were harvesting the consequences of it the following day. Todoroki mumbled before he took another bite of his slice of bread. "It was Bakugou's fault…"

"That's not what it sounded like," pointed out his classmates in near-perfect unison, even Iida contributing to the accusing monotone chorus.

"So you say but it truly was Bakugou's fault," deadpanned Todoroki in retaliation. He popped the last chunk of bread into his mouth and put his sling backpack on. "There are things far better than sounds only."

"T-There are…?" asked Kirishima, Kaminari and Midoriya at the same time, gulping down hard as they followed Todoroki walking to the front door with expectant gazes.

"Hey! You can't just drop the conversation like that and leave!" yelped Kaminari, jolting up from the sofa out of the blue when Todoroki started putting his shoes on without giving them any more intel. "Share some more of your knowledge with us poor, desperate virgins…!"

"Speak for yourself," scoffed Sero, a relaxed smirk on his lips as he closely jotted down all words spoken in the back of his mind. Desperate, him? Not at all. The rest was what it was.

"I don't want to," said Todoroki, the air around him rippling due to the sudden temperature rise. He slowly turned his head and looked over his shoulder at his classmates. "This time it was inevitable but you won't have a second chance. *At all* ."

"Y-Yes, Sir…" they all acknowledged, voices cracking slightly under the murderous pressure squeezing their throats tight. Or Bakugou was starting to rub off on Todoroki a bit too much or they were the same grade of ferocious beast, with the small difference of Todoroki being less vocal about it daily.

Whichever it was, all they knew was that neither of them should be trifled with - individually or as a couple.

What they didn't know, however, was that they had unknowingly set free a second threat on their otherwise peaceful dorm life. Explosions, fire and ice could come for their lives if they took a wrong step.

And boy if there weren't a lot of idiots living under the same roof with a knack to trip into the lion's mouth.

Chapter 49

"Excuse me," said Todoroki, shortly after sliding the hospital room's door open. He was greeted into the room by both his mother and his older sister, who had been deep in conversation at the moment of his arrival.

"A month only can seem so big now, even with letters," chuckled Rei, adjusting her sitting position on the bed to make space for her youngest child. "How have you been doing lately?"

"I've been doing okay," said Todoroki, removing his sling backpack before he took a seat on the bed. "What about you?"

"Same as always," said Rei, gently smiling at him. She suddenly remembered about a very recent event and her expression became even more cheerful. "Oh, that's right. You and Natsuo went to Shouto's school festival, didn't you, Fuyumi? How was it?"

"It was your regular school festival, but with U.A. proportions, I guess," explained Fuyumi, chuckling lightly at the little big adventure that the previous day had been. "U.A. is so big, Natsuo and I ended up getting slightly lost in the middle of the crowd. But after eating some lunch at the canteen, we successfully managed to reach Shouto's classroom and visit his cosplay café. I couldn't tell you this yesterday but that outfit suited you, Shouto."

"Thanks," deadpanned Todoroki, a small sigh escaping from in between his lips. That outfit that everyone seemed to like to praise had already been shredded to ribbons and was currently being used as a pillow by a moody cat-like koala. No, perhaps not a pillow, but a security blanket of some sort. Bakugou didn't seem to like it but he sure had been quick at using it as a replacement for Todoroki. That annoyed him slightly but definitely not as much as their bad

dormmates did.

"Your character was a prince, wasn't it?" inquired Rei, heaving a disappointed sigh shortly after Todoroki silently nodded his head in acknowledgement. "It's a pity that photos aren't allowed during school events now. I would have loved to see you dressed like that too."

"It wasn't anything that special," said Todoroki, feeling slightly bashful at his mother's words. "Just a prince outfit."

"Surprisingly, you were also doing quite well with the skits. I didn't know you're able to act like that," added Fuyumi, wholeheartedly surprised by this new side of her sibling that she had seen for the first time. Since he was either completely expressionless or angry at their father whenever she was around, it felt foreign to see him accurately carry on a fake character. "Did your whole team have to memorise scripts for all of the skits or were you ad-libbing?"

"We were following scripts for the skits at first, but when Bakugou decided to join the table's area, we started creating them on the spot or adjusting them to include one more character," explained Todoroki, a small smile starting to curl up the corner of his lips. "Though, in the end, all he did was stay sat down on the throne glaring at everyone. He even refused to talk with or serve the customers."

"What character was he playing?" asked Rei, cocking her head to the left in wonder.

"He proclaimed himself as the usurper," deadpanned Todoroki, all hints of the smile fading into a blank. "That's how he got away with stealing my throne. And several other incidents."

"My, that does sound just like him," laughed Rei, partially hiding her

smiling expression behind her hand. It would be tasteless of her to become so merry over such trivial topics, especially at her age, but it was hard to restrain herself, given the circumstances. “Did you have fun, though?”

“Yes,” said Todoroki, his smile once again peeking out to say hello. “It was the most fun and entertaining school festival up until now.”

“Mom, you’ve met Bakugou already?” inquired Fuyumi, her eyes going round with shock as she quickly glanced back and forth to her little brother and their mother. Fuyumi had a bad feeling about that. The worst might be about to happen or, perhaps, it had already happened but, surprisingly, it had gone… well?

“No but Shouto mentions him frequently in his letters,” explained Rei, gesturing towards the drawer where she was currently storing all of the latest exchanged letters. She chuckled. “I’ve never met him personally but part of me feels as if I’ve gotten to know him quite well thanks to Shouto’s narration on his daily life.”

“I-Is that so…?” sighed Fuyumi, relieved that perhaps the unexpected hadn’t happened just yet. It wasn’t that she thought it would be wrong of her younger brother to expose his romantic relationship with his classmate to their mother, she simply didn’t want the news to have any type of negative connotations. Both her brother and her mother had the bad habit of blaming and burdening themselves in unhealthy ways and they had just recently managed to fix the inexistent problem in their relationship at long last - Fuyumi didn’t want things to go south again out of misunderstood words.

“I told Mom about Bakugou a few days after we started going out,” deadpanned Todoroki, his words going straight to the point - or perhaps straight for the kill, depending on the perspective - in the same blunt manner of always. “Since I was stuck in school for a full month, I ended up sending more letters than usual to compensate for the lack of visits.”

“Of course you did…” groaned Fuyumi, her head slumping down in defeat. With the random way Todoroki had told her about his relationship with Bakugou, maybe she should have known that he had done something similar already without any direct repercussions to it. Part of her suspected that it had been with their friends and classmates. It had never occurred to her that their mother had been the original coming out experience. Rei didn’t seem bothered by it in the slightest so Fuyumi concluded that there would be no reason for her to be concerned either. She softly cleared her throat. “Bakugou also seems to be a very skilled actor. A tyrannical usurper, wasn’t it? He had the role down to a T.”

“No, he wasn’t acting. That’s how he always is,” deadpanned Todoroki yet again, a small sigh actually escaping from in between his lips. “He’s easy to anger and quick to strike back. Brash and snarky regardless of who he’s speaking with. He always needs to be in a position with authority over everyone else around him and won’t admit he’s wrong even after being proven otherwise. He always does whatever he wants and only plays along with others whenever it benefits him in some way. He won’t even hesitate to manipulate his own friends. He’s so stubborn and pigheaded that he won’t change his mind after making a decision, even if it kills him.”

“Ehh… Are you sure you want to date someone like that…?” asked Fuyumi with a certain reluctance. By that description alone, Bakugou didn’t sound like someone anyone would want to go out with. He didn’t even sound like someone anyone would want to be friends with, to be honest. Fuyumi then realised something. “Wait, he’s like that but he’s aiming to become a pro hero in the future? That doesn’t seem like a good match...”

“I thought so too in the beginning,” acknowledged Todoroki, his expressionless demeanour slowly, softly melting into a smile. “But Bakugou’s actually really gentle. He’s never upfront about it because of his pride but he always puts others above him. He looks after everyone around him while no one is looking and quickly comes to the rescue whenever asked. Even though he will yell at us for it

afterwards. He's good at everything he does because he puts a lot of thought, time and effort on it. He's someone who would rather do everything on his own than ask someone for help but when he does, he makes sure to pay them back tenfold. He might have the bad habit of manipulating and twisting others around his little finger but he never does it with bad intentions or to harm others. He's just awkward when dealing with other people. Sort of like me. But I think that cute awkward side of his is what I love the most about him."

"…" Well, that had certainly left Fuyumi speechless. For someone so oblivious to the little details and nuances human relationships came jam-packed full of, her little brother sure seemed to have mastered Bakugou from inside out within a few months. That was an unprecedented event. When she glanced sideways to their mother, more surprises came into view.

Rei didn't look surprised or taken aback like she was. Her silence wasn't a lack of words or masked rejection. She was just a woman feeling proud of the little bit of work she could claim as her own, just a mother feeling wholeheartedly happy for her son's choices.

Good thing Natsuo couldn't come this morning. He would have started crying after seeing this, chuckled Fuyumi in the back of her mind, hiding a small sniffle by slowly adjusting her glasses on the bridge of her nose.

"From your words alone, you seem to be getting along extremely well with him," said Rei, slowly reaching out to her son to gently caress his head. Just like she used to do when he was only a small boy. "I'm happy for you two."

"I guess. We do argue sometimes. And don't see eye to eye a lot of times. I think it's something impossible to avoid, though, since Bakugou is like that," confessed Todoroki, the corner of his lips turning upwards slightly more. His cheerful expression took a small dent, however, when he recalled a recurrent concern of his. "But…"

“But?” repeated Rei, withdrawing her hand back to herself as she patiently waited for her son to continue speaking.

“Sometimes I wonder if I’m taking advantage of us dating and his prideful personality,” mumbled Todoroki, his heterochromatic gaze falling to the bedroom’s floor. “Bakugou does so much for me. He cooks for the two of us whenever he has the time. He actually learned how to make soba noodles from scratch so he could cook cold soba for me, even though he isn’t that fond of it himself. He always goes along with my requests, no matter what they’re about. He even gave me a present yesterday, for no reason whatsoever other than having spotted it and remembered that it was something I liked. But he always refuses it when I try to do something for him. Sometimes I can convince him to let me help him but it takes a lot of time to persuade him. I feel that he just spoils me but doesn’t want to be spoiled by me. It doesn’t feel right. Isn’t there anything I can do for him?”

“Ahahaha. Oh, Shouto, after everything you said, I thought you knew him better than that,” said Rei, half hiding her laughter behind her hand. “Bakugou is always on the giving end and you in the receiving one. Is that what you’re thinking? From my perspective, Bakugou is the one being spoiled by you. Everyone feels happy if they see their beloved one enjoying the food they prepared especially for them. Everyone feels happy if they see their beloved one feeling satisfied and fulfilled. Everyone receives a smile in return for the gifts they offer to others and that smile is worth much more when it comes from our beloved one. You said he refuses your help but you also just said he goes along with your requests. Hehehe. If that isn’t acting spoiled, then I don’t know what it is. Not to mention, you also just said that he’s awkward when it comes to other people. Perhaps he’s not used to having others do things for him. Pride isn’t the only reason why people refuse others, it might be because they never had someone they could depend on around them all the time and learned to do everything on their own. He’s a gentle boy who puts others above him, right? He doesn’t want to inconvenience you, Shouto, especially when he’s able to do everything all by himself.”

“I see,” said Todoroki, slowly lifting his head and straightening his sitting position. That did make a lot of sense. Other than his current daily habits and personality, Todoroki hardly knew anything else about Bakugou. In fact, from his past, he only knew about his turbulent friendship with Midoriya - and it was a very feeble knowledge since Bakugou refused to talk about that era of his life and fought back whenever questioned about his childhood friend. There were loads of things Todoroki didn’t know about Bakugou, from his likes and dislikes to his family and past. He chuckled when he realised that his mother was absolutely right - Bakugou was pigheaded enough to pretend to spoil others while acting spoiled himself. “He truly is a cute one.”

“I have to agree with that,” acknowledged Rei, also softly chuckling to herself. She perked up slightly when a sudden idea popped up in her head. “Oh, I know. You said he gave you a gift yesterday, wasn’t it? Why don’t you buy him a gift too?”

“A gift?” repeated Todoroki, tilting his head to the left as he thought about the suggestion.

“Yes, I think that’s a good idea too,” said Fuyumi, nodding her head a couple of times. “If he isn’t used to others doing things for him, then you just need to slowly get him used to it. A present is a good first step for that. Show him that he can count on you for the spoiling too.”

“A gift…” mumbled Todoroki as he crossed his arms over his chest. His heterochromatic eyes suddenly started shining in excitement amidst his expressionless demeanour. “A gift, huh?”

Todoroki knew the perfect first gift for Bakugou. Todoroki knew the perfect way to spoil Bakugou through his requests.

“If you know what you should do, then don’t let us hold you back,”

said Rei, gently patting her son's back to urge him into action. She happily smiled at him while saying, "I can't wait to hear all about it in your next letter."

"Nn." After a resolute nod, Todoroki got up from the bed and picked up his sling backpack. With half of his body in the corridor and the other half still inside of the hospital room, he said, "I'll come to visit you again soon. We'll tell you all about it then."

"I'll be waiting," acknowledged Rei, waving goodbye at her son as he slid the door closed behind himself. After a couple of seconds, she sighed, a tender smile still sticking to her lips. "I guess I was wrong. He's much more similar to me…"

"Hm? Did you say something, Mom?" inquired Fuyumi, turning her gaze from the door back to her mother.

"No, it's nothing," said Rei, her face perking up once again as she gingerly smiled. "I can't wait for their visit. Maybe I should get a cell phone like Natsuo recommended me."

"Ahahaha!"

Chapter 50

Chapter Notes

> Happy 50th chapter!! This fic sure grew bigger than I was expecting but I'm glad it did.
> I was so excited for this chapter that I waited awake for Friday to arrive! Hence you have this Friday's release super, duper early XD
> Thank you very much for all of your kudos and comments! You guys absolutely rock and make my day with every single comment you write!
> I can't guarantee we'll have a 100th chapter "celebration" but we'll definitely get darn close to it.
> Kudos to you all <3

“Hm… Maybe I should have gotten a bigger one…”

“Nnn…” After hearing those mumbled words, Bakugou stirred on the bed, pulled an opening on the messy bedsheets over his head and slowly opened one of his eyes. He found Todoroki half sitting down on the corner of his bed, half propped on the nightstand. With a sigh, he fully pulled the bedsheets from his head. “What the hell are you doing…?”

“Bakugou… Finally awake?” inquired Todoroki, looking down at the bed. He straightened his sitting position and turned slightly more so he could face Bakugou better. “You sure slept until late today.”

“Nn… What time is it?” asked Bakugou while stifling a yawn. He rolled around on the mattress to glance at the alarm clock on the nightstand. It was a few minutes past 1 PM so yes, Bakugou certainly had taken his sweet time oversleeping that morning. He let his body slump back down on the bed but still turned his head to look at Todoroki when he started ruffling his hair with gentle movements. “How did the visit go?”

“It was okay. I stayed there for a while talking with my mother and sister and then did some shopping before returning to the dorm,” said Todoroki, his fingers getting lightly tickled by Bakugou’s blonde strands of hair as he removed his hand from his head. He pointed with his thumb to the nightstand. “I actually got back only a couple of minutes ago and came to drop this in your room right away.”

“Hm…?” hummed Bakugou in wonder. He lifted his chin from the mattress and craned his head the bare minimum to be able to take a peek at where Todoroki was pointing at. The bedsheets slid down his naked body as he sat up on the bed, eyes stuck to the small display on his nightstand.

“You got me a mini koala so I got you a mini tree,” deadpanned Todoroki, gently adjusting the koala plush toy leaning on the bonsai tree’s trunk. “Now you don’t need to fight over me all the time anymore. That koala has its own tree and you have yours.”

“Isn’t the bonsai’s size a bit disproportional to the plushie’s?” pointed out Bakugou, glancing up and down at the small potted black pine being awkwardly ‘hugged’ by a koala plush toy that was only a couple of centimetres smaller. He would have liked to add insult to injury by saying that eucalypts were the trees koalas usually inhabit, as its leaves are their primary food source, but he was thankful that Todoroki hadn’t been gullible enough to drag a full-grown eucalypt home with him.

“Yeah, I forgot to take the koala’s size into consideration and just bought the one that I thought looked the best,” confessed Todoroki, a small pout showing on his expressionless demeanour. Maybe Bakugou wasn’t enjoying his tree gift as much as he had enjoyed getting the koala plush toy back…

“Pfft! That’s so like the half-ass you are,” snorted Bakugou, a small, tiny gentle smile shadowing his lips as he lightly tapped one of the bonsai tree’s branches with his fingertip. He quickly went back to his

savage mode, though. “I’m not taking care of that thing. One tree is all I can take responsibility for! So you’re in charge of watering it and grooming it and not letting it fuckin’ die because if it does, you’re next! Got it!?”

“Sure,” acknowledged Todoroki. Maybe Bakugou was enjoying his tree gift much more than he had enjoyed getting the koala plush toy back - though he showed it through his usual passive-aggressive snarky remarks rather than a straightforward smile or thank you. “Wait, you need to groom bonsai trees? I thought only cats and dogs needed grooming.”

“I’m so dragging you to the gardening section of the school library after I have some lunch!!” growled Bakugou, slapping the back of Todoroki’s head out of frustration. “No, you know what? Never mind! I’ll take care of it myself or a stupid half-and-half brainless moron might kill-”

“No, I’ll take care of it,” interrupted Todoroki, suddenly shortening the distance between their faces without any prior warning. “I might have bought it as a gift for you but I still intend to look after it as if it’s my own. It’s just a tree, it can’t be that hard to take care of, right? Besides… if you start paying too much attention to other trees, I’ll be the one getting jealous next.”

“Yeah? Do whatever you want then,” said Bakugou with a moody hmph, readily turning his face the other way while crossing his arms over his chest. “You know what’s waiting for you if it dies. Good fuckin’ luck with extending your lifespan.”

“I’ll do my best,” said Todoroki, delivering a quick peck to Bakugou’s cheek before returning to his original sitting position. He picked up something else from the nightstand as he did so. “I also got this.”

“What now?” sighed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes, hesitantly turning back to Todoroki to check the next item of his shopping haul. He had gotten considerably speechless in the first couple of seconds after noticing the bonsai tree on his nightstand but he knew exactly what to yell at Todoroki the moment he read ‘Special Feature: Top 10 Hot Springs in the Kantou Region’ on the cover of a popular travelling magazine. “Just how eager are you to go out on a date!?”

“Very eager,” deadpanned Todoroki right way, no hesitation whatsoever in his claims. “The world’s our oyster, Bakugou. We need to strike fast or you might get us in trouble and grounded again.”

“Why are you already pushing the blame of hypothetical future punishments on me!?” hissed Bakugou, yanking the magazine out of Todoroki’s hands. He vigorously pointed at the front cover while steadily shortening the distance between him and Todoroki. “You haven’t forgotten that we still have to go on a trial date before the real dates can start, right? I told you that if any more shit happens while we’re out together, I wouldn’t go on another date with you ever again, didn’t I? So you better start mentally preparing yourself to… never… go out- Achooo!”

“How about you put some clothes on before we start discussing which hot springs we should go to?” suggested Todoroki, nestling his left side against Bakugou. He very lightly activated his fiery Quirk, only enough for the air around them to be nice and toasty. “You catching a cold would be worse than Aizawa-sensei’s punishments.”

“You sure have been getting ballsy lately, Todoroki,” grumbled Bakugou under his breath, his face scrunching up into a frown. He easily manhandled Todoroki against the bed, victoriously looking down on him from his higher sitting position. He stabbed his index finger right on top of Todoroki’s chest, tapping it a couple of times as he spoke. “I’m choosing the next dating spot and I’m not taking any of your cheek for it. We go where I want to go, we do what I want to do and that’s the end of it. I’ll think about the rest after I make sure we can go on a date without ending up being teleported to the middle of fucking nowhere or getting stuck in maddening dungeons or someone

getting kidnapped by half-baked villains."

"Two of those weren't dates," pointed out Todoroki, tilting his head to the left against the bed. Bakugou was always quick at adding those two eventful moments where they were on their own so Todoroki quickly reached his own hasty conclusions about his words. "Oh... Bakugou, were you already in love with me during the training camp? Was that why you didn't want to be paired up with me for the courage test?"

"Huh!? Fuck no!!!" yelped Bakugou, strongly denying Todoroki's claims with a repulsed expression that had creased his face even further. "What part of me looked lovestruck at the time!? I didn't want to be paired up with you because I couldn't stand your damned ugly mug, that's why! I would have acted the exact same way if I had been paired up with the Shitty Nerd! There's no way in hell I was already in love with you at the time! There isn't, okay? Stop looking at me that way! I wasn't! I really wasn't!!! Gah, stop it with that look!!!"

"You're so cute, Bakugou," chuckled Todoroki, his expressionless demeanour softening into a tender smile as he observed Bakugou's furious expression slowly melt into a bashful, panicky blush. He pushed his upper body up from the bed and quickly kissed Bakugou's sulky lips. "I don't care if you were or weren't in love with me at that time. But I'm really happy you are right now."

"S-Stop with that! Die!" growled Bakugou, slapping his hand on Todoroki's face to push his head away from him. Or at least, that was what he intended on doing. After having done that to his lover countless times already, Todoroki quickly predicted his actions and evaded his hand, wrapped his arms around his lower back and stole another kiss from him. Yes, Todoroki definitely was getting ballsier and ballsier each day that went by. He really hated it. But didn't actually hate it either, at the same time. That's why Todoroki's previous questions had shaken him up so much - where was the line that separated hate from love? Bakugou had no idea.

“Let’s go get some lunch?” inquired Todoroki, seeking Bakugou’s answer by looking him straight in the eyes. “I want to eat your soba.”

“We’ve run out of soba so you’ll have to wait while I make more…” grumbled Bakugou, his frowning brows becoming more skewed. He didn’t avert his defiant gaze, though, and also looked Todoroki straight in the eyes. “It’s getting too cold to eat only cold soba so how about I change your usual menu a bit?”

“As long as it’s not too hot, I’ll eat anything you cook,” acknowledged Todoroki, slowly removing his arms from around Bakugou. It seemed his sweet-talking had been successful yet again. And sure enough, it was just like his mother had told him earlier that morning. Bakugou was doing all of the work, yes, and he was also going along with his requests but he seemed to be more eager to do all of it than Todoroki himself was after asking for it. As such, Todoroki tenderly engraved that information about Bakugou close to his heart. *The best way to spoil Bakugou is by letting him spoil me. Got it.*

“I have some tofu and vegetables so maybe I’ll make a soba noodles sou- Argh!!” muttered Bakugou to himself as he yanked the bedsheets away and got up from the bed to get dressed. His plans flopped together with his body. He had completely forgotten the side effects that came after their crazy sex marathons. Bakugou punched the wooden floor while he awkwardly pushed his face and upper body up. “Shit… Not again!!”

“I don’t think you’ll be able to make soba from scratch today,” deadpanned Todoroki, blankly staring at the wiggling stark-naked butt in all of its glorious display right in front of him. Scratch the lunch plans, they should just spend the rest of their day off in bed.

“The hell I won’t!” growled Bakugou, forcing his gelatin-like legs to stay still in place and not buckle down like a castle of cards again. He smugly looked at Todoroki once he managed to stabilise his standing position. “Just try me!”

Needless to say that Bakugou only reached the communal area on the ground floor a few hours after he proudly declared ‘try me’ to Todoroki.

Chapter 51

This is it… We're all going to die today…, inwardly stammered the few survivors from Class 1-A. They fearfully lifted their frightened eyes and hesitantly glanced up at the two human-shaped demons slowly walking past a sea of corpses - the remains of their friends who had already succumbed to the duo's terrifying torture methods.

How did Height Alliance turn into a bloodbath, you must be asking?

It all started with a simple conversation between friends.

"Bakugou! So you've finally decided to grace us with your presence~" jokingly said Sero as he stepped inside of the communal area of the dorm with Kirishima and Kaminari and noticed both Bakugou and Todoroki by the dining tables. After consulting with some of their classmates, they all decided to go out on a small shopping trip to the closest shopping centre, which ended up extending all the way to the latter half of the afternoon.

"Isn't it a bit early to eat dinner?" noted Kirishima, a puzzled expression on his face as he walked up to the dining tables. "It's not even 6 PM."

"This is breakfast, lunch and mid-afternoon snack all in one…" grumbled Bakugou after chewing a mouthful of soba noodles. He sipped some of the soup broth directly from the bowl and then dipped his chopsticks in it once again, aiming for some of the veggies and tofu next. "I'm starving so who cares what time it is? Not like I'll kick the bucket for binging non-stop after being starved for 24 hours straight, *right* ?"

"I already apologised for that," said Todoroki, leisurely sipping on his

lukewarm soba noodles soup while expressionlessly keeping eye contact with one extremely irked Bakugou. They had skipped dinner the previous night and jumped straight to bed but Todoroki had eaten some food for breakfast before visiting his mother. The same couldn't be said about Bakugou, who had slept all morning and then been coerced into staying in bed for a couple of hours more thanks to Todoroki's persistence. Hence why Bakugou was eating his first meal in countless hours while glaring daggers at Todoroki uninterruptedly.

"I don't want your apologies, I want some more fuckin' food!" growled Bakugou, slamming his empty bowl on the table. He didn't even need to speak, the furious frown on his face said it all.

"I'll get you another bowl," sighed Todoroki, settling down his chopsticks on his bowl and grabbing Bakugou's while getting up from his seat. He walked up to the kitchen counter and put some more of their homemade soba noodles in the bowl, afterwards pouring a few scoops of the tofu and veggies soup broth being kept on a low simmer on the stove. When he placed the refilled bowl in front of Bakugou, he wasn't offered a thank you or any type of acknowledging grunt, only more of those continuously glaring red eyes. He sighed once again. "Here you go."

Bakugou readily dug into the next bowl of noodles soup, so fast that Todoroki had yet to sit back down before he restarted slurping the soba noodles.

"You made this, Todoroki?" inquired Kaminari, taking a peek inside of the pot on the stove. The smell was already mouth-watering as it was, but the visuals of the clear broth filled with bite-sized tofu cubes and an assortment of veggies somehow managed to be even more appetising than just the smell alone. "Looks delicious~"

"No, Bakugou cooked it," said Todoroki, neatly nestling his bowl on his hand while he slowly picked up a few more soba noodles with his chopsticks. He let the broth dribble down completely before he

slurped them up with gusto. "Home-cooked soba is the best."

"You still have enough energy to cook…?" interjected Kirishima, his voice coming out with a tired undertone just by thinking about it. As expected of Bakugou, he had stamina that rivalled with that of a doped up beast. He pulled the chair next to Bakugou and took a seat there too. "You need to tell me the secret behind your endless stamina. I sure could use some of it today. Is it the food? Going to bed early? Or is it something else?"

"Definitely not the food or the sleep," deadpanned Todoroki, which earned him a kick from underneath the table and a displeased low growl from Bakugou.

"Yeah, no… That's not what I… Never mind," started Kirishima, an eyebrow slightly arched as he exchanged quick glances between Bakugou and Todoroki. But he somewhat valued the steaming peacefulness currently in the dorm so he decided to drop the subject for the time being. "We have two extra days off starting tomorrow thanks to the school festival. Do you two have any plans, now that your punishment is over?"

"No, not really," said Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. He took a bite to some more veggies and slowly savoured them before continuing. "Shit happens when we make plans so we might as well not make any and see where it goes…"

"C'mon now. If you stay well behaved and don't start scaring little kids, Aizawa-sensei won't punish you again," snorted Sero, joining in the table too. "And you had plenty of hands-on experience during the school festival. You two should be good to go now, Gou-chan."

"Shut up," grumbled Bakugou, twisting his nose at Sero while sipping down some of the soup broth.

"If we plan things properly, we might not get involved with more Quirk incidents," pointed out Todoroki, placing his chopsticks down so he could reach out to something on the chair next to his. A travelling magazine slowly came into view and was slid over the table's surface towards Bakugou. "Have your pick, Bakugou."

"You're going to drag that thing around everywhere you go until I say yes, aren't you?" asked Bakugou after an exasperated roll of his eyes. He had taken so many sneak peeks to that cover already that he memorised the titles of every featured article in it before having read a single page. Not by choice, though. Todoroki was the main culprit for constantly bringing the travelling magazine to the conversation. The look on his expressionless face told him that he had no intention of stopping any time soon either. Bakugou inwardly groaned, *Why is he suddenly being so fussy about hot springs? I thought he was more into cold stuff than hot ones… I seriously don't get him.*

"Oh! Are you planning a short trip next?" noted Kaminari, opening the travelling magazine on a random page. He promptly grabbed the magazine from the table and brought it closer to his face. "Oh shit! Are you for real!? How come I didn't know about this!? This looks amazing!!"

"What? What is it?" asked Kirishima as he craned his neck to take a peek at the magazine's contents.

"There's a restaurant featuring a burger eating challenge," said Kaminari, gulping down hard as he turned the open magazine to Kirishima and revealed the photo of an oversized burger, one that could rival in size with the pot gently simmering on the stovetop. "If you manage to eat all of it within 1 hour, you don't pay for the challenge, get a lifetime discount for their entire menu and get your name written on their 'Manliest Men on Earth' wall!!"

"Are you for real!?" yelped Kirishima, yanking the magazine out of Kaminari's hands to read the article too. "Ohh… OHH! I need to get this food challenge done! It will get me one step closer to Crimson Riot!"

"Who cares about the challenge itself, I just want to eat that humongous burger and get the lifetime discount!" said Kaminari, his mouth salivating at seeing the delicious photo of the challenge burger and the other menu items also being showcased as a size comparison.

"Calm down, it's just a chunk of minced meat in a bun," scoffed Sero in a dismissive way. "These food challenges have a dark, dark secret to them, especially if they involve lifetime discounts. If you eat this massive burger, you can bet your ass you'll never want to eat another burger for the rest of your life. It'll turn you off from burgers permanently."

"Ahh~ I can already taste the tender pattie dripping juices down my throat~" dreamily said Kaminari, too focused on his food fantasies to pay attention to Sero's warning.

"This is the perfect challenge to test my manliness," said Kirishima, excitedly crashing his hardened fists against one another. "Whether I can complete it or not, I'll be able to gouge how far away from Crimson Riot's level I am!"

"There's no stopping them now, I guess," sighed Sero with a roll of his eyes. While his friends were busy with their future machinations and fatty fantasies, Sero continued going through the magazine and turned to the next page. He nearly jumped to the table when the title of the following article was revealed. "What!? Who would have thought they were doing an event like this so close by!"

I have a bad feeling about this…, inwardly noted Todoroki as he

leisurely continued slurping his soba noodles. When he threw a glance in Bakugou's direction, the frown slowly starting to crease his brows told him he was definitely thinking the same thing as him.

"Does it also involve burgers/manly challenges!?" yelped Kaminari and Kirishima at the same time, immediately throwing themselves at the magazine a second time as if two starving wolves.

"No, it's on the opposite end of the spectrum," said Sero, lightly shaking his head as he continued reading the article to obtain more information. "It's a fair-slash-market with discounted healthy produce from the local farmers and food industry companies. It's one of the best ways to obtain premium products at discount store prices!"

"But you don't even cook that frequently?" pointed out Kaminari, not understanding at all how exactly an event like that had gotten Sero so excited. The burger-eating challenge seemed much more appealing than grocery shopping with additional travelling steps.

"Don't underestimate my healthy foods expertise!" declared Sero, his face dead serious as he took some mental notes on the famous companies that would have a booth in the event.

"Have it your way then," said Kirishima with a shrug of his shoulders. "So that makes it the restaurant for me and Kaminari, and the market event for Sero…"

"Bakugou, Todoroki, let's go to Chiba!!" yelled Kirishima, Kaminari and Sero at the same time. Sero had even picked up the magazine to point at the article that summarised everything that could be visited, done and experienced in Chiba prefecture in the upcoming weeks. "You get to have your couple trip and we get to go to the places we want to go!"

"HUH!? No fucking-" roared Bakugou, angrily slamming his soup bowl on the table once again. But he interrupted himself halfway through his raging denial, as a certain conversation suddenly popped up in his brain. What slipped out of his mouth next silenced the entire communal area. "Okay."

"Bakugou…?" called Todoroki, an eyebrow arched as he quizzically stared at him. Perhaps he had been too late at warming him up and Bakugou had already gotten a terrible cold, one with such high fevers that it was making him lose his mind.

"...Eh? 'Okay'...?" gasped Kirishima, slowly, very slowly processing the affirmative reply. He strongly pinched his arm and then pinched Kaminari's, who jolted and yelped in surprise. Only then did it finally dawn on him what Bakugou had said. A huge grin popped out on his lips, stretching them from ear to ear as he raised his arms in celebration. "Hell yeah! We're going to Chiba, guys!!"

"What!? No! Why are you celebrating!?" furiously growled Bakugou, noisily hitting the table with his fist afterwards. "I just said 'okay' so why the hell are you acting like that!? You should be running away faster than the wind and hiding underneath your beds like wussies!!"

"They're happy because you said 'okay', Bakugou," deadpanned Todoroki, closely staring at Bakugou's vexed demeanour while their three classmates threw a metaphorical party at it. He was the supposedly dense one so how come Bakugou was the one stealing the lights of his personality trait?

"That's not what you told me!" hissed Bakugou, slapping his hand on the table a couple more times. "You said people stick to me because I refuse them so strongly! So I did the opposite! And yet look at those idiots!!!"

"Bakugou, there's no way anyone would suddenly pull back from you when you finally act nice to them," pointed out Todoroki, releasing a small exasperated sigh. Was this how Bakugou felt every time he acted in an obtuse way? Surprisingly, Class 1-A's powder keg seemed to have a longer fuse than he had initially thought. "How long do you think they've been waiting for you to accept their invitations?"

"……!!!" gasped Bakugou, body frozen in place, heart sinking to the pits of his stomach. He promptly turned his head towards his celebrating friends, screeching at the top of his lungs, "I take that back! I'm not going! *We're* not going! No fucking way! Go on your own, for all I care!"

"What's this, Bakugou? Are you perhaps running away?" inquired Kaminari with a shit-eating smirk on his lips. He slapped Bakugou's shoulder a couple of times and then left his hand resting there. "Is a trip to a neighbouring prefecture scaring you? Are you scared? Are you? You are, aren't you? Just admit that you are. We won't mock you for it, don't worry. We're best buddies, after-"

"Who's scared!?!? Definitely not me!" roared Bakugou, feeding his meaty fist straight to the delusional idiot's face. “I dare anyone to say that a second time! You wanna go to Chiba? Fine! Let’s go to Chiba, damn it!!!”

“YAY!!” celebrated Kirishima and Sero with a high-five.

I guess we’re going to the hot springs sooner than I was expecting, inwardly deadpanned Todoroki, merely releasing a small sigh as he observed Bakugou grumbling under his breath in annoyance and both Kirishima and Sero levelling up their celebratory dance. *Though I don't know how I feel about those three coming too. Especially after that bet from yesterday…*

"Did something good happen?" inquired Uraraka, arriving at the communal area from the girl's section together with Asui, Ashido, Yaoyorozu and Jirou. She stopped next to the dining table and tilted her head slightly. "Isn't it a bit early to eat dinner, Todoroki-kun, Bakugou-kun?"

"That question again?" groaned Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. He simply continued slurping his soup, ignoring said question entirely as he did so.

"You'll never guess what just happened," cheerfully said Kirishima, feeling so excited that he could barely stay still in the same place. "We're going to Chiba during our extra days off!!"

"You and Sero-chan?" inquired Asui, inwardly throwing a quick 'cute~' at Kirishima's grinning features.

"No, no! Me, Sero, Kaminari, Todoroki and, surprise of all surprises, BAKUGOU!" explained Kirishima, gesturing at the frowning blonde on the table with both hands. "He said 'okay'! Bakugou said 'okay' when we asked him to come with us!"

"EH!?" yelped the girls at the same time, Yaoyorozu even half-covering her surprised open-mouth expression with one of her hands.

"But he doesn't even seem to be in a particularly good mood?" pointed out Jirou, glancing up and down at Bakugou. He seemed closer to murdering someone, as usual, than excited for going on a small trip. "And speaking of good moods, where's Kaminari? He'll be as excited as you guys when he hears about it."

"Huh? He was right here just a couple of seconds ago," said Sero, looking around the communal area for the spirited away Kaminari. "Did he go to the bathroom or some- Oh crap, Kaminari! Are you still alive!?"

The moment he briefly glanced downwards, Sero immediately spotted a corpse-like yellow shadow sprawled on the floor. A fist-shaped bright red mark decorated Kaminari's face, highlighted even further by the thin lines of blood dripping from his nostrils.

Fatality no. 1: Kaminari Denki

"He was asking for it," leisurely declared Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. He gathered his used dishes and tableware and took them to the kitchen sink, turning off the stove on his way there. "Are you going to eat more soba or can I store it on the fridge already?"

"I'm good with just this," said Todoroki, slowly slurping some more soba noodles.

No mercy, no nothing, mumbled their classmates in the back of their mind. They all one-sidedly offered a couple of prayers to Kaminari as Kirishima carried his lifeless body to one of the sofas.

"Chiba, huh~ I'd like to go there too~" sighed Ashido with a dreamy voice. "I've never visited Tokyo Disney Re-"

"Don't. Even. Think. About. It," hissed Bakugou, a vein nearly popping out on his forehead as he spelt out each word as clearly as possible.

"I-I wasn't thinking about anything," denied Ashido, shaking her head

with frantic motions. "W-We have plans made already. Right? Right!?"

"Y-Yeah," acknowledged Jirou, also frantically nodding her head to support her friend's last-minute rescue strategy. "We have our days off booked from daybreak to dawn…"

They all heaved a sigh of relief when Bakugou loudly scoffed a 'Hmph!' and went back to sorting out his food.

"Wait… Chiba?" mumbled Uraraka, her head going round and round in circles as she tried to recall a distant conversation that had maybe involved the neighbouring prefecture in some way… or maybe not. She couldn't quite remember the contents of the conversation but she was pretty sure it had happened during lunch break. "...I have the feeling something has happened in Chiba recently…? Hmm…"

"It has!?" yelped Midoriya, getting frozen in place while on his way to fill a glass with water. He turned his head towards Uraraka with rusty robot-like movements, his face as pale as a ghost. "Oh no… What if they cancel the 'All Might Fanclub's Top 150 Moments' screening at the culture centre!?!? I booked the train tickets weeks ago!!!"

"That's what I was trying to remember!!!!" declared Uraraka, throwing a thumbs-up at the panicky Midoriya as he fearfully checked the news on his phone.

“Nope! Nah! Not happening!” growled Bakugou, dropping the pot back to the stovetop as he was beginning to transfer its hot contents to a smaller container for storage purposes. He viciously pointed at Midoriya, his face that of utter disgust and indignation. “I’m not going to share the same prefecture as the Shitty Nerd again! I’m out!”

“Huh? Eh? What?” babbled Midoriya, completely lost on what was

happening right now. What had he done (or not done) this time to warrant that sort of biting remark from his childhood playmate?

“Bakugou and Todoroki want to go on a date, Kaminari and I want to participate in a burger food challenge and Sero wants to visit a healthy produce market so we’re planning to go to Chiba,” quickly summarised Kirishima, searching around the freezer for some ice cubes for his knocked out friend. “You’re going to Chiba too? Talk about coincidences!”

“Well, I try to be where heroes and hero-related events are so there’s no way I’d miss the chance to go to an All Might cinema screening so close by,” said Midoriya, bashfully grinning at Kirishima. “I was super excited about this event but saddened that I couldn’t go since it’s during the week. I bought the entrance ticket and train ticket as soon as I heard we’d have two days off after the school festival! So yes, talk about coincidences!!”

“I think I said the same before but good for you, Deku-kun,” congratulated Uraraka once again. “And Bakugou-kun, it’s not like you have to go with Deku-kun, right? You and Todoroki-kun do what you want to do there and Deku-kun goes to the All Might screening. That’s all! You don’t even need to catch the same train!”

“If you knew there was a cockroach in your room, it’d bother you even when you can’t see it, right?” pointed out Bakugou with his neutral tone.

“Pest level now…?” sobbed Midoriya. Bakugou’s calm words had stabbed deeper than his usual savage roars.

“Uraraka’s right, though, Bakugou,” said Todoroki, placing down on the table his finally empty soup bowl. “We’re going there for a different purpose. Just ignore him like usual. Pretend he’s not there.

You're good at cleaning, you'd never have a cockroach infestation."

"Easier said than done! I know very well how Deku's sick brain works! So I know how this whole thing will go if we're in the same place!" grumbled Bakugou, once again accusingly pointing at Midoriya. "I don't want any of *that* during my days off too! I'm fed up with that stupid stalker behaviour of his!"

"Midoriya-san might have some… um… obsessive personality traits but he's going to Chiba to watch an All Might screening, correct?" pointed out Yaoyorozu in hopes to calm down the slowly boiling blonde. "He'll prioritise All Might and the hero event over you, Bakugou-san. So yes, please just ignore him and have fun with Todoroki-san."

"Third year of elementary school, August," venomously spewed Bakugou, his disgusted expression now bordering gagging levels. "Summer vacation."

"W-Wait, Kacchan!" yelped Midoriya, his face ghastly pale as he realised what Bakugou was about to disclose in front of their classmates. "P-Please… Don't do it…!!!"

"I was in Okinawa with my parents for two weeks, he was doing I don't give a fuck whatever back home with Inko," continued Bakugou nevertheless, his red glaring eyes sideways pinpointing the retreating nerd. He grabbed him by the back of his ugly t-shirt before he could escape. "On our fourth day in Okinawa, we had a delivery to our hotel room. This stupid stalker had sent me a notebook filled with his ramblings on a TV segment about heroes."

"He just wanted to share his impressions with you," said Asui in Midoriya's defence. Yes, she was aware that a written testimony was a bit overkill but Midoriya was Midoriya so it didn't come as too much

of a surprise.

“Nobody had given him the hotel's address, let alone the room number,” hissed Bakugou, quickly releasing Midoriya’s t-shirt as if he had just touched something foul and disgusting. “I beat the shit out of him when I came back because he wouldn’t tell me how the fuck he got the address!”

“...” All eyes were focused on Midoriya once that additional information was provided. There was no way of defending him on that one.

“How did you get the hotel’s address, Midoriya?” inquired Todoroki, blankly staring at his friend from the table. The air around the left side of his body rippled and swivelled with the sudden temperature rise.

“I… Um… Kacchan’s mom briefly mentioned the… um… place they were going to visit to my mom and… well…” babbled Midoriya, protectively wrapping his arms around his head to shield himself from all of those staring eyes but also to hide his shame away. “I… ah… narrowed down the hotels in the area and… um… called the reception area of a few and… um… sent it when I found them?”

“FUCKIN’ DISGUSTING!!!!” screeched Bakugou, his body shuddering from head to toes in revulsion. He was one stalker event away from starting to develop hives whenever Midoriya was nearby… and half a stalker event away from permanently blowing up with Midoriya from Earth’s surface.

“That was creepy, yeah, but he was just a kid back then, who knew nothing of what is right and what is weird,” said Kirishima, contributing to the conversation once again now that he had finished providing the knocked out Kaminari with some first-aid. “He’d never

do the same thing now. Right, Midoriya?"

"Y-Yes! I'd never do anything like that again!!" acknowledged Midoriya while furiously nodding his head.

"Second year of middle school, December…" grumbled Bakugou, a vein bulging and throbbing on his forehead just at the thought of remembering that story.

"KACCHAAAAAAAAAN…!!" bawled Midoriya, sinking even lower in the pits of despair. His childhood friend sure was keen to dig up and put all sorts of dirt on him on display that afternoon.

"Inko was out sick with a cold so my old hag told the Shitty Nerd to stay at our place for a couple of days to not catch her cold too…" continued Bakugou with a sour voice. He was so focused on trying to keep the food in his stomach that he didn't even notice Todoroki getting up from his seat and making a direct beeline towards Midoriya. "Didn't really solve anything since he still ended up getting sick… Nearly dying, or so I was hoping he would, stupid Deku asked for a final request and the old hag forced me to do it…"

"Request? What kind of request…?" inquired Jirou, gulping down hard in dry as her eyes switched from Bakugou to Midoriya, from Midoriya to Todoroki, then back to Bakugou again.

"He wanted some freaking photos printed," growled Bakugou, the palm of his hands smoking and crackling slightly. "Just some candid shots he had taken while stalking every pro hero in the city, right? Wrong! It was photos of everything!!"

"Everything?" repeated Sero, an eyebrow arched in suspicion.

“Everything that had happened at my place during the days he stayed over!!!” roared Bakugou, two explosions loud reverberating from his hands. “Photos of going to school, photos of breakfast and dinner, photos of bathing time, photos of sleeping hours, photos of fuckin’ everything I was doing!!! I beat him half to death when I came back from the store and banned him from my bedroom for the rest of his stupid stalker life!!!! He knows what awaits him if he steps inside of my room ever again, dorm included!”

“.....”

“I-It was the first time I stayed over at Kacchan’s place…! I… um… I couldn’t help it… I was just so excited about it...” whimpered Midoriya, well aware that there was no excuse for what he had done a couple of years ago. Step by step, he tried to put as much distance as possible between himself and the raging fiery demon approaching. “T-Those photos have all been d-destroyed and deleted! There are none left, I swear! All I do now is write things down in my notebooks, really…! I very rarely take any photos of Kacchan now! It’s just 1 or 2 every month or so! And they’re only for my hero studies, nothing else! T-Todoroki-kun, I swear it’s not like that…! I’m not… I’m… i-innocent… I don’t… GaaaaaaAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!!!”

Fatality no. 2: Midoriya Izuku

“I never knew it was this bad…” mumbled Ashido, genuinely shocked at getting to know more about the hidden façade of her classmate. She was so taken aback that her ears completely blocked out Midoriya’s pained cries as Todoroki cold-heartedly scorched him in the middle of the communal area. No one held any thought of interfering with the interrogation-slash-torture session. “I just thought it was, you know, a normal fanboy phase… Like when girls get really into a band or an actor… But this is bordering criminal…”

“I always thought Bakugou was just being a little bitch to Midoriya for no reason other than being a jerk but now…” said Sero, slowly shaking his head in disapproval. “Damn, turns out Midoriya was the real jerk of the story and Bakugou is just trying to mitigate his traumatic experiences with him…”

“Does Bakugou have a villainous personality since birth… or did growing up with Midoriya turn him into that…?” wondered Kirishima, voicing out his thoughts but not expecting to have them answered by anyone. It was far too complex of a problem to throw random theories into the air.

“I shouldn’t have sent Deku-kun that photo…” said Uraraka with a dejected voice, Asui next to her gently patting her back to comfort her.

“ *What photo?* ” asked Bakugou and Todoroki at the same time, their blood-thirsty eyes immediately turning from Midoriya to the squeaky girl.

“Ah… I… might have… taken a photo of you two… um… sleeping on the sofa… that morning...” hesitantly confessed Uraraka, her legs trembling like bamboo to the wind. She knew what she had done was wrong so it was better to come out clean right away than to prolong her incoming misery. “And… sent it… to everyone…”

“URARAKAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!”

Fatality no. 3: Uraraka Ochako

“It’s over, right, Yaomomo...?” inquired Jirou, fiddling with her cell phone to erase the photo her classmate was currently being severely admonished for. She didn’t want to give any excuse for Bakugou to

turn on her once he was done verbally slaying Uraraka… or for Todoroki to light more people on fire like in a modern time witch trial.

“I believe that the worst has passed, yes…” acknowledged Yaoyorozu, also following through the same procedure of erasing the photo from her cell phone and sending a group message to everyone else not present, beckoning them to destroy all copies they had.

“For as long as no one fans the flames again, at least,” pointed out Asui with a tired sigh.

Asui spoke, her (masochistic) classmates complied.

Unfortunately for everyone at Height Alliance.

Chapter 52

“Well, well, well~ Look who has finally decided to show up!” said Mineta with a sing-song voice, an obnoxious smirk twisting his lips from ear to ear as he casually walked up to the sofas. He majestically sat down in one of the available seats, ignoring completely the tense atmosphere in the communal area.

"What do you want now?" barked back Bakugou, his brows twitching in annoyance at hearing that grating voice. He lifted his gaze from his prostrated classmates - they tried but Kirishima, Sero, Jirou, Yaoyorozu, Asui and Ashido still ended up being roped into the same admonishing session Uraraka had already gone through and was now recovering from; they might not have committed the crime but they became accomplices to it by not stopping her or telling her off - and peered over at the shit-eating grin in Mineta's face. "You're next in line so just sit tight there for half an hour or so."

"Oh, I will, don't worry," acknowledged Mineta, demonstrating seemingly saintly patience as he comfortably snuggled himself on the sofa and quietly waited there. "You and Todoroki can take your time. Then the three of us can enjoy a long, detailed conversation. Maybe over some tea?"

"Huh?" interjected Bakugou and the group being told off by him at the same time. Did Mineta hit his head somewhere before coming down? Did watching too much porn and reading too many erotic novels turn his brain into mush permanently? Because the usual Mineta would never approach Todoroki, much less Bakugou, just like that.

Unless he had something to gain from it, obviously.

"Are you feeling okay, Mineta?" inquired Todoroki, an eyebrow slightly arched as he walked closer to the sofas. He had already

extracted all the information and confessions he needed (for the time being, at the very least) from Midoriya so he was now free to help Bakugou with the next batch of victims. "Did you get hit by a personality switch Quirk?"

"C'mon, guys. I'm the same good, old Mineta Minoru of always," reassured Mineta, laughing softly to himself as if a joke that only he could understand had been voiced out. His gaze suddenly became sharper and more serious as he focused on his two targets. "Todoroki, Bakugou, my good pals, my brothers from another mother, tell your buddy the truth. I won't judge you for it. Shame on me if I did! ...Which brand and dosage?"

"Huh?" was all Todoroki could blurt out too as he stared blankly at Mineta. He glanced at Bakugou, hoping to get some more explanations on what was going on, but he seemed as lost in all of this as Todoroki was. "Brand and dosage of what?"

"Don't be shy now, my boy. You know very well what I'm talking about," laughed off Mineta, giving a quick wink at his two classmates to let them know he was on to them. "There's no way anyone can go at it as many times as you two without some medical help."

Yup, definitely the same good, old Mineta Minoru of always, inwardly cringed their classmates, Sero actually face-palming himself and Asui silently shaking her head in disapproval. Mineta had just reached a new all-time low in their consideration.

"Don't hog the secrets all to yourselves, share everything with your buddy here," creepily said Mineta, his intensity shooting up at the drop of a hat. His ragged breathing, his blood-shot eyes, his smirking, drooling mouth - it was a total 180 from his previous saintly demeanour. "Which brand and dosage? Any position you'd want to recommend for better performance? What about acquired techniques? Oh, and of course, most important of all, they can't work well on Bakugou only, it needs to be generalised to the entire female popula-"

"It seems spring cleaning has come early this year," said Bakugou, his voice as calm and peaceful as that of a murderous demon ready to commit mass murder. His vice-like hand grabbed Mineta by his face and yanked him out of the sofa, keeping him suspended mid-air as he carried him over to the kitchen. He then shoved his head inside of the kitchen sink and turned on the cold water faucet. "Let's give you a good rinse, outside and inside, yeah? First with just some water. But this good pal of yours, brother of another mother, thinks all of this pestilence won't go away unless I rub it all off with a nice dose of industrial bleach!"

"Gaaaah! Baagugoo! Da wagga ish…!" gurgled Mineta, suffocating and drowning on the water falling right on top of his nose and mouth. His only saving grace in that situation - if there was actually any - was that his downwards position prevented the water from fully running down his oesophagus and trachea to his stomach and lungs. The running water kept him from properly breathing, though. "Haa! Haa! Bagu- Haa! Hel- Haa…! Zomebohi… helb… Haa!"

Fatality no. 4: Mineta Minoru

"I'm not touching you ever again, not even with a ten feet pole," said Ashido, her face scrunched up in utter disgust. She gently patted both Yaoyorozu and Jirou on their backs, who were the two most disturbed in that room after having been forced to listen to his barbaric, perverted questionnaire. "I don't even want to look at your face."

"Mineta, you went way overboard just now," sighed Kirishima, shaking his head in disapproval too. He could hardly glance in the kitchen sink's direction, more out of respect for Bakugou than pity over the soul being extinguished by his hands. "Even if it was just guys here in the room, it would still be wrong to ask something like that. Just wrong. Right, Todoroki?"

"We'd die if we used any of those," answered Todoroki, with all of the seriousness and expressionless an airhead like him could muster in one go after having closely thought about that initial question.

"Todoroki, you fucking moron, will you just shut up!?" growled Bakugou, opening the faucet even more when Mineta gave a shaky thumbs up at Todoroki. "I'm trying to clean the trash, okay!? Stop shovelling more shit up his ass or his stinking mouth will get even worse!"

"Yeah, Todoroki, just ignore Mineta," advised Sero, even he slightly fed up with their classmate's crude comments. There was a time and place for everything and now was definitely not 'dirty talking hours'. He quickly added but as a whisper only. "Though feel free to come to consult with the rest of us whenever you want. Not sure how big of a help we'd be but we're willing to listen. To everything. No matter how detailed you want to get. Within certain limits, of course. It's still Bakugou, deep down, so the less, the better."

"Thanks but no," denied Todoroki, inwardly releasing a tired sigh. He felt he had just returned to the same conversation of that morning and, no matter how he tried to rationalise it, it still irked him. "We're good as we are. I meant it when I said it was the last chance you got. And no more bets about me and Bakugou either."

"Bets?" repeated Bakugou, momentarily removing Mineta's head from the sink to give him a small break while he looked over to Todoroki. A suspicious frown creased his brows. "What bets?"

There's no god in this world…, inwardly whimpered Kirishima and Sero, getting down on their knees on the floor all on their own. *And if there is, it's one hell of a sadistic bastard…*

"I'm sorry…" apologised the two of them at the same time, bowing

their heads at Bakugou.

"What have you idiots done this time...?" asked Bakugou in the most exasperated tone all of them had ever heard him speaking - including the aftermath of all of Midoriya's previous stalker misadventures to date. He dropped the half-drowned sewer rat on the floor and menacingly slow-walked closer to his prostrated friends. "If you spit it all out right now, I won't grind your bones to dust, just break them a couple of times."

"I think it's time for us to leave…" softly whispered Jirou to Yaoyorozu, Asui and Ashido, gently gesturing with her index finger towards the girls' side of the dorm building. All four of them silently nodded their head in acknowledgement and even more silently started crawling away from the incoming violent explosion. Unfortunately, they couldn't afford to take Uraraka with them but Bakugou was already too preoccupied with his squad to care about the other mortal remains spread through the communal area.

"Sorry, Bakugou!" yelled Kirishima after taking a long, deep breath. He rammed his forehead on the floor, no hardening involved, and went all out with his apologetical discourse. "You two never showed up in the cafeteria for dinner yesterday night so we all figured, just leave them be, they're probably busy doing couple stuff somewhere and will pop out later for dinner when done. So we were completely caught off guard when we came back to the dorm and you were still busy doing couple stuff in your room. An hour later, still busy! Two hours, three hours and no signs of stopping. Our fragile manly minds broke down at some point and we let our teenage curiosity overtake us, body and soul! We're not as dirty-minded as Mineta so we weren't as far gone as to ignore the fact that it was still you and Todoroki and, as such, the only way we could make the whole thing bearable to us was by making a bet out of it! Only Sero, Kaminari and I went forward with it. I mean, my room is right next to yours and I'm used to hearing you scream, but shit… Not that kind of screaming… The rest just completely ignored the whole thing in their rooms or somewhere else. I don't know, I can only speak for myself and for those who were with me at the time. Anyways! To make the long story short, from the moment we came back to the dorm to get some sleep until you two

decided to get some sleep, we heard all of it. All while betting about the time you'd stop. I won, by the way. And I'm really ashamed of that victory! Believe me, I truly am! It's a mistake I will carry with me for the rest of my- ...Huh?"

As Kirishima was reaching the climax of his long-winded apology, the smell of smoke and burnt *something* reached his nostrils. He promptly raised his forehead from the floor and looked up to the infernal scenario in front of him. Bakugou was uncharacteristically frozen in place, his whole face scarlet red as he gawked at him and Sero. The shocking reveal had left him too taken aback for words and admonishments, apparently. Todoroki, on the other hand…

"So when you mentioned a bet, you actually meant you had been spying on me and *my* Bakugou…" coldly stated Todoroki, his icy gaze contrasting with the pyre-like flames erupting from the left side of his body. "I see. Of course, you did. Midoriya, those two kids, you, Sero, Kaminari, Ashido too at times… You're all in for it. But too bad for you…"

"...Eh?" babbled Kirishima and Sero at the same time, all of the air they were trying to suck in getting sealed in their claustrophobic throats.

"Bakugou is already all mine, his voice included," declared Todoroki, lifting his foot to take a step closer to the two cowering heroes-in-training. A charred black footprint was left on the wooden floor. "All of him belongs to me and I don't plan on sharing with anyone. Not even with you, Kirishima, or you, Sero, or Midoriya over there. I'll burn down any tree that tries to steal my koala. You heard his voice so now it's only fair that we get to hear your screams too, right?"

"T-Todoroki…?" called Kirishima with a stutter, a shudder running down his spine as the vengeful Ifrit grew closer and closer. Not even at the beginning of the school year had Todoroki looked this intimidating and he had been suffering from quite a lot of anger issues

at that time. Seeing as defending himself would probably only fuel Todoroki's burning jealousy even further, Kirishima tried to turn to the only person able to stop him without getting killed in the process. "Baku-"

"Burn in hell, you stupid degenerates…" spewed Bakugou, sliding his thumb horizontally in front of his neck to mimic a slitting motion.

A cacophony of screams echoed and reverberated through the entire dorm, much, much louder than Bakugou's booming angry screeches did as he and Todoroki added two more names to the victim list.

Fatality no. 5: Kirishima Eijirou

Fatality no. 6: Sero Hanta

-.-

"I've been getting constant noise complaints from other students about class 1-A's dorm for hours now," sighed Aizawa, his hand a couple of inches away from the front door's knob. His ears could clearly hear the source of the complaints and his brain promptly decided on the best course of action for him to take, as their teacher. He turned around on his heels, switched off his cell phone and started walking back to the teacher's dorm.

Ignoring stupid arguments between students was the logical thing to do.

Chapter 53

"...I'm not a big fan of this sudden reversal of roles…" softly mumbled Bakugou, his body laid down on the futon in an extremely awkward position thanks to the person closely sticking to him. He was the one with a bad sleeping position, he was the one who needed Todoroki's body to be able to sleep - so why the hell was Bakugou the one being held prisoner in bed that morning?

Right, it was all because of their moronic classmates and what had happened the previous day.

After taking their sweet time making sure that Kirishima, Sero and Kaminari (who had eventually woken up from his KO state) would never make another bet for the rest of their lives, Bakugou got sick and tired of all of that yelling and yapping and decided to go back to his bedroom. He thought that Todoroki would stay in the communal area and do some damage control over the whole situation. He thought wrong.

Todoroki stuck to him like glue the moment they got into the elevator. Continued sticking to him once they arrived at his bedroom. Was still sticking to him as they went through the basic skills needed to take care of a bonsai tree. And so it kept on going until bedtime, where Todoroki quite literally dragged Bakugou to his bedroom, set down the futon on the floor and wrapped it around them. That had been Bakugou's bizarre night as a burrito filling.

"Haaa… It's way too hot like this…" groaned Bakugou, softly wiggling his body around to free one of his arms from Todoroki's close embrace. He wiped the sweat on his forehead with the back of his hand and then bonked his closed fist on the crown of Todoroki's head. "Hey, big baby. Time to wake up and let go of me!"

"Nnn… Bakugou's… mine… Ngh…" babbled Todoroki in his sleep, sluggishly nuzzling his face against Bakugou's chest. His body jolted slightly when his cheek was suddenly pinched and stretched. "Ouch…"

"I won't be for very long if you keep this up, that's for sure," scoffed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. He stretched Todoroki's cheek some more, tightening his pinching grip a notch to make sure that the pain fully woke him up. "If you were to accidentally let out a single spark, you can bet your ass that this whole room would get blown up to hell and back. You're supposed to be my portable AC… so why the fuck are you suddenly turning into a freaking sauna!? HUH!?"

"Ah… I'm not very good with those…" mumbled Todoroki, his brain still working its way around full wakefulness. With that said, he closed his eyes once again, hugged Bakugou's body even more closely and rolled their bodies and the futon around them until he was fully on top of Bakugou.

"Gahh! Todoroki… you fucking idiot…!" yelped Bakugou, getting even more squished and sandwiched between Todoroki and the thick futon circling their bodies. At this rate, he would pass out due to oxygen deprivation or due to a shortage of blood on essential body parts. He once again hit Todoroki's head with his only free hand, even yanking and pulling on his hair now and then. "Let go of me already! And do it fast! Are you listening to me!? Enough, damn it! You've got your point across already! They'd have to be blind to not see it, or completely pea-brained to forget what happened yesterday!"

"....."

"And then I'm the stubborn one!!" yelled Bakugou in utter exasperation, his head and arm falling back to the floor. Soft, prolonged groans continued to escape from his throat as he tried to come up with a way to free himself from his sulking boyfriend, preferably before any accident happened and another bedroom was destroyed. Unlike his, Todoroki's room was riddled with easily

inflammable features and furniture. "...You're the one who's always telling me to ignore those fools. Why are you kicking such a fuss this time? Because they heard us having sex and made a bet out of it? Well, they fuckin' got what they deserved already! If they know what's good for them, they won't even dream of doing something that stupid ever again. If they do, natural selection it is, then."

"....."

Not working, huh?, inwardly grumbled Bakugou with a click of his tongue. He was starting to lose the feeling on his only usable limb so he better hurry it up with a counter-strategy. "Hey, how long do you plan on staying like this? We can't go anywhere with a futon wrapped around us. And you're not even saying anything back to me. It's boring as hell like this… Are you going to continue sulking like this during the rest of our days off? Sure, be my guest. Go right ahead and sulk for all I care! It's not like I'm feeling lonely here or anything. Keep ignoring me. I'm more than used to being left alone during days off. And silence becomes a good conversational partner after a while. It's all… just a matter of getting used to it…"

"...Bakugou?" softly called Todoroki, lifting his face from his chest. The moment he did so, a forehead came crashing against his - an impact strong enough to get his whole cranium rattling around. "OUCH!!"

"Awake now, you dumbass!?" hissed Bakugou, using Todoroki's distraction to free his other arm and slide slightly more from underneath him and the futon. His forehead was as sore and red as Todoroki's but priorities laid somewhere else. He grabbed Todoroki by the collar of his shirt and pulled him from the burrito-shaped futon too. Their lower bodies were still well buried in the messy futon but at least they both had enough room to breath and not bake in that smouldering heat. With that done, Bakugou exhausted the last portion of the strategy he had cooked up in a rush. "Hah! Caught you, hook, line and sinker! Ah, shit… It's way too hot…"

"...You shouldn't be faking that type of thing," deadpanned Todoroki, pulling his body up to a sitting position on the tatami floor after pushing the futon aside.

"Faking? Ah, yeah, let's go with that," acknowledged Bakugou with a dismissive wave of his hand. He was about to get up and get changed from his sweat-soaked sleepwear but he was yet again pushed down by a body just as sweltering hot as his. "Shit! You still haven't gotten enough!?"

"Sorry, Bakugou. I'll stop sulking now," apologised Todoroki, gently hugging Bakugou rather than hold him tightly like he was doing before. He ruffled his spiky blonde locks a couple of times before parting their bodies. Even if just momentarily. As compensation and a second apology, Todoroki delivered a small kiss to the corner of Bakugou's lips. "You want to go out, right? Then let's go. Together."

"Don't go all smooth on me after being a clingy pain in the ass…" grumbled Bakugou under his breath, turning his head away from Todoroki. "I'm not falling for it…"

"Yeah. You're right. That was childish of me," said Todoroki, sitting back down on the floor after releasing a small sigh. "I let my jealousy get the best of me again. Sorry…"

"Well, I did all of that during the school festival too so we're even now, I guess…" grumbled Bakugou with pouty lips. He slammed his foot on the floor and then got up in a single motion. "C'mon, hurry up getting dressed. We got plenty to do after feeding those two downstairs in my room."

"What are the plans for today?" asked Todoroki, readily doing as told and starting to take off his clothes to change.

“Huh? We’re going to Chiba, right?” said Bakugou as if that was the most obvious thing in the whole world. He yanked off his t-shirt before he started browsing through the clothes he had long left in Todoroki’s room for convenience sake.

“After everything that happened yesterday, you’re still planning on going there?” deadpanned Todoroki, his arms halting halfway with pulling his pants down. It was hard to tell if Bakugou truly wanted to go there or if it was just another of his bouts of pigheadedness - it was even harder to tell how Todoroki felt if it was the latter rather than the former.

“Oh yes, we’re going,” announced Bakugou, his lips slowly curling up into a mischievous smirk. “It’s payback time, hehehehe…”

“I don’t think that’s a-”

“What, you don’t want to go on a date?” asked Bakugou, his smirk readily evaporating from his face to be replaced by a pouting frown. “You were all hyped up about it yesterday, going on and on about hot springs and shit. You were even carrying the travel magazine everywhere you went!”

“I don’t want to go on a date that’s being used as an excuse to get revenge on other people,” said Todoroki, resuming with his undressing. “It might be fun for you but think about how I’d feel if the date I was looking forward to was nothing more than a ruse for payback.”

“Hmph! You’re underestimating me if you think I’d dedicate an entire day of my life to get back at those morons,” scoffed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. “There’s this thing called multitasking. Teaching those

dumbasses a lesson won't take up more than 30 minutes of our day, that I can assure you."

"What are you planning this time?" sighed Todoroki, an eyebrow slightly perked up on his brows as he stared at Bakugou in both puzzlement and scepticism. "There's no way you can get payback on so many people all at the same time. We're not even going to visit the same places."

"Then watch and learn, Todoroki. Watch and learn," mischievously snickered Bakugou, his mood only becoming better and better with all of the incoming future prospects of that day. "Yesterday we put them screaming in pain. By the end of today, they'll be weeping in despair. Heheheheheheh…"

I'm starting to feel bad for them now, inwardly deadpanned Todoroki, silently gazing at the straight-out evil smirk twisting Bakugou's features. Just as those feelings of guilt started prickling at his heart, they faded away completely. Todoroki remembered yet again what it was that drove all of them to this point. Maybe tasting a little bit of despair would help his friends growing up to become better human beings.

Chapter 54

Chapter Notes

Hiya, everyone~
I released an extra side story for Heat Index for a little seasonal change. Go check it out if you'd like to see TodoBaku's first Christmas as a couple :3
Happy holidays!

"Morning!" Kirishima greeted everyone in the communal area with his usual cheerful grin. He got likewise chipper greetings from Ashido, Hagakure and a timid nod from Koda.

What he got from Bakugou and Todoroki, however, was a sour grimace from the former and a blank stare from the latter.

"H-Hey," said Kirishima with a certain awkwardness. His facial expression decreased to a slightly strained grin. He inwardly sighed. *It's almost as if we went back in time to the first couple of weeks after the opening ceremony. This might take a while to fix…*

"Hmph!" With that moody scoff, Bakugou faced the kitchen counter and the stuff on top of it once again to continue what he was doing before Kirishima's arrival. Todoroki, on the other hand, shortened the distance between the two of them to super glue proximity levels.

As soon as Todoroki's hips clashed with him, Bakugou lunged his hand sideways to push his head - and body too, as a result - away from him. But, again, Todoroki read his move like an open book and promptly averted the palm of his hand. As such, Bakugou kicked the back of Todoroki's lower legs and tripped him butt-first against the floor.

"Oh right, there was also that one…" mumbled Bakugou to himself as he leisurely jumped over Todoroki and walked towards the fridge

once again. He added a package of aburaage to the stuff on top of the counter. "Give me a small pot, Todoroki."

"Isn't that a bit too much food for breakfast?" pointed out Todoroki, nevertheless doing as told and using his sat down position on the floor to reach for the lower cupboard.

"If I don't cook it, it'll just go to waste," said Bakugou. He skillfully propped the pot on the stove, filled it with eyeballed amounts of dashi stock, sugar and soy sauce and focused his attention back on the aburaage. While neatly cutting the pre-prepared deep-fried tofu pouches in halves, he momentarily halted the cooking process, glanced at the other things on the kitchen counter and twisted his nose a little bit. "Yeah, this is way too much for two people only. Hey, Kirishima! How much rice is there in the rice cooker?"

"Huh!?" yelped Kirishima, startled at being suddenly addressed by the person so vehemently glaring or ignoring him. He double-checked the insides of the rice cooker as he took a serving of the rice for his breakfast. "Ah… Half full, I guess?"

"Then dump what you were about to take back inside of the rice cooker and bring that thing here," instructed Bakugou as he placed the cut aburaage on the bubbling and steaming pot and covered it with a lid. The kitchen didn't have any advanced cooking instruments like a drop lid so a regular one would have to suffice. He then turned around on his heels and crossed his arms over his chest as he waited for the aburaage to get ready. "Hey, wastes of space. I'm gonna feed you our food scraps so be sure to eat them all."

"You're going to cook for us again!?" excitedly exclaimed Ashido, immediately jumping up from the sofa. "Our day off just got even better!"

"Like hell I am! I said it's our food scraps, didn't I!? And you already ate breakfast so you're out!" hissed Bakugou, quickly dismissing Ashido's ecstatic squeals. With a click of his tongue, he looked over to Kirishima, who was rooted in place without knowing what to do. "What are you waiting over there for? We've got a train to catch, remember!? And where the fuck are even Sero and Kaminari!? They better get here within 5 minutes or I'm dragging them out of bed myself!"

"R-Right, right…! I'll go check on them ASAP!" said Kirishima as he transported the rice cooker closer to the stove. He then immediately dashed up the stairs to get his two friends out of their bedrooms as fast as it was humanly possible.

With that, Bakugou got the rest of the food items finished in the blink of an eye. He reheated the rest of the soup broth from yesterday's binging session and fixed it a bit, had Todoroki's usual share of soba noodles slightly warmed up to room temperature and got three-fourths of the rice mixed with rice vinegar, sugar and a pinch of salt. Soon enough, there was a pile of inari sushi, a pot filled with soba noodles soup broth turned into quick-fix miso soup, Todoroki's plate of homemade soba noodles and some salt grilled salmon for Bakugou.

"Ohhh! This is the last thing I was expecting out of today," said Kaminari, drool threatening to run down his chin as he gawked at the same soup that had seduced his stomach the previous day. He, Sero and Kirishima were now all dressed up and ready to depart as soon as they had their fill with that feast. He clapped his hands and grabbed himself a pair of chopsticks. "I won't stand in ceremony, though. Thank you for the meal~!"

A small chorus of appreciative words soon followed, as everyone in the communal area partook on a piece or two of the inari sushi, leaving the rest for those yet to eat breakfast.

"So good!!" exclaimed Hagakure, half of her inari sushi seemingly

disappearing into thin air after a single bite. "The sushi rice is on point! As expected of our resident master chef!"

"Yeah, yeah, whatever," scoffed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes, mixing a little bit of shichimi togarashi on his miso soup for an additional spicy kick. He took a small sideways glance at Todoroki, who was sitting next to him, and gently kicked the leg of his chair. "C'mon, hurry it up. We still need to deliver Aizawa-sensei the leave permission papers."

"Yeah…" sighed Todoroki, slowly slurping up his cold soba after briefly dipping it in the dipping sauce. It seemed that this was already starting to show signs of yet another failed date. Otherwise, why would have Bakugou offered to share their meal with others, especially with those they had straight-out tortured the previous day?

"Damn, this miso soup sure hits the spot!" sighed Kirishima in satisfaction, half of his bowl's contents already gone. "This just comes to show that, yeah, meat is nice and all that, but you can still eat like a king without it."

"But you'd still pick meat first any time of the day," pointed out Sero, a playful smirk on his lips as he snagged another piece of inari sushi. "Breakfast included."

"Yeah, I mean… Obviously, no?" said Kirishima, his face dead serious as he verbally flaunted his carnivorous preferences. "Meat's always at the top of the food pyramid."

"Oddly enough, you're not wrong there," mumbled Ashido, greedily staring at the food she had been prohibited from having due to her earlier accidental comment. "Didn't peg Kirishima for a dietary specialist…"

"He definitely didn't mean it in the sense both of you are thinking," chuckled Hagakure. Kirishima had probably mistaken the top of the food pyramid as the most important and prized food items, rather than the ones people should eat in lesser quantities. Not to mention, only red meats were included in it, the rest of the edible animal kingdom was on the tiers below.

"Wanna make it even better?" asked Bakugou, smugly looking at Kirishima's very empty plates. He popped a bit of his grilled salmon on his mouth while pointing at the kitchen counter. "Add some rice to it. As if a miso soup-based chazuke. But you can't add it with the other bits in the miso soup, like the tofu and the veggies. Only the broth. It'll taste better than freakin' wagyu beef!"

"Ohhh! I gotta try that!!" excitedly yelped both Kirishima and Kaminari, quickly slurping down the rest of their miso soups. They then made a beeline to the pot on top of the stove, ladled more of the soup to their bowls, greedily ate the extra bits and when only the broth was left, piled up the remaining regular rice in it.

Truth to Bakugou's words, Kirishima and Kaminari got to taste a bit of heaven with each mouthful of the broth-soaked rice.

"I need seconds of this…!" yelled Kaminari, a small sob getting stuck on his throat as he repeated the process all over again. There was something touching about that recipe but he couldn't quite figure out what. It was making him unconsciously shed some inner tears for no reason whatsoever.

"Yeah, keep on eating it. Not even a drop or grain is to be left behind," said Bakugou, leisurely sipping on his spicy variant of the miso soup. *Two down. Hehehe…*

"Wow, if I knew we were having a group meal, I'd have come downstairs sooner," noted Midoriya, surprised at seeing such a crowded table during a day off. Sure enough, there was hardly anything left from the glorious breakfast meal.

"There's none for nerdy stalkers so fuck off," hissed Bakugou as soon as Midoriya got within a certain distance of him. This time, he resorted to stepping on Todoroki's foot when he scooched closer once again - it might be more reflex than intentional, at this point. For both of them.

A disheartened Midoriya ate whatever else was stuffed in the cupboards and fridge, as it was far too late for him to cook more servings of rice.

"Alright, time to get going!!" loudly announced Kirishima, body filled with youthful energy and stomach nearly bursting at the seams with delicious food. "After giving Aizawa-sensei the papers, of course."

"Yeah, we wouldn't want to get grounded after going outside for too long or too far away without a warning," snickered Sero, throwing a pointed glance at both Bakugou and Todoroki. He got an annoyed growl as a comeback. "You think Sensei's in their dorm or the teacher's room?"

"I don't think it matters much whether we give the papers to Aizawa-sensei or another teacher," pointed out Todoroki with a small shrug. "Yesterday, I gave them to Recovery Girl and I had no problems."

"Yes, but you only went to visit your- Hiiiii!" said Midoriya but his sentence was cut short halfway through by a frightened squeak. He hesitantly turned his head sideways to peer at the person grabbing his neck from behind. "Um… K-Kacchan…?"

"Stay right there. Leave 30 minutes after us. Or else you won't live long enough to reach Chiba," threateningly warned Bakugou, his red eyes that of a blood-thirsty demon as he glared at Midoriya from above.

"B-But I have a seat booked in a train already…" stammered Midoriya, his sweaty hands tightening around the straps of his yellow backpack. "I have to leave now or I'll lose my train…"

"Tsk!!" Bakugou simply clicked his tongue in annoyance and yanked his hand out of Midoriya's neck. He adjusted the strap of the backpack loosely hanging on his shoulder and exited the dorm, sourly grumbling to himself as he did so. *Shitty always-prepared-for-every-hero-event Nerd… At least it's already done so only one left now.*

With Midoriya walking slightly behind the rest of his classmates, they quickly arrived at the teacher's room to deliver the leave permission papers. Coincidentally, a sleep deprived-looking Aizawa and shrivelled up All Might were in the room talking about future exercises, now that the big school festival event was a thing from the past.

"Out to enjoy your extra days off?" inquired All Might, receiving Midoriya's document directly and checking its contents before putting his signature in the teacher section.

"Yeah! I've been looking forward to this screening about your top 150 moments for weeks now!" said Midoriya with doubled raw energy, his green eyes sparkling in excitement as he stared at his idol in the flesh. No amount of proximity between them could eliminate the obsessive fanboy in Midoriya.

"O-Oh yeah?" acknowledged All Might with a tinge of cringe. He wasn't as much of a fan of Midoriya's fanboy moments as Midoriya was a fan of all of All Might's moments.

"Just give me the papers," sighed Aizawa, rolling his eyes around in distaste at yet another display of favouritism by a supposed teacher.

Sero, Kirishima and Kaminari orderly lined up to deliver their leave permissions to their homeroom teacher. But as Todoroki was about to do the same, the paper was suddenly swiped from his hands.

"Huh?" gasped Todoroki, his mismatched eyes following the paper being pulled further away from him and closer to Bakugou. He only arched an eyebrow as he silently observed Bakugou fetch a pen from a nearby desk and make a couple of corrections and changes to his leave permission. Once he was satisfied with the result, he passed it back to Todoroki. Still lost about what had just happened, he slowly turned his gaze downwards, to the modified document. "Why did you…?"

"You wanted to go to the hot springs, right…?" grumbled Bakugou under his breath, his lips softly pursed into a pout as he averted looking at the flabbergasted Todoroki. "No clue if they're gonna have a room for a last-minute reservation, though…"

"Bakugou…" That was all that managed to slip out of Todoroki's mouth. His body did the rest of the talking by tightly embracing and hugging the living lights out of his adorable lover. *That's why he was in a rush to use all of those ingredients. We won't be here to eat them tonight. I see. Now I understand everything. Being spoiled by Bakugou is the best.*

"Argh! Todoroki, you dumbass, you're gonna break my freaking ribs…!" growled Bakugou, his leave permission getting all crumpled up in between their chests. Unfortunately for Todoroki, he wasn't as benevolent as to withstand this kind of PDA right in front of his classmates, much less their teachers, so Bakugou struck where it hurt the most. Figuratively, of course, as he was currently being squashed. "You have five seconds to let go before I blow up with this freaking piece of paper and return to the dorm! And it's counting already!"

Begrudgingly as it was, Todoroki expressionlessly released Bakugou as if nothing had ever happened and delivered their leave permissions before something truly happened.

"Be careful out there and don't misbehave too much," offered Aizawa as some last words of teacher-to-student. His deadpan eyes quickly slid across the two last papers he had received and pinpointed their owners as he signed and approved them. "Especially you two, Bakugou, Todoroki. If something happens and you don't call us within two minutes, you're banned from leaving the school grounds until graduation day."

"I'll keep an eye on him," deadpanned Todoroki, giving an expressionless thumbs up at their teacher before Bakugou slapped his hand back down.

No one mentioned anything but everyone inside of the teacher's room knew that Todoroki's words were nothing but a bluff. It might not be his initial intentions, but Todoroki always ended up being a willing participant in Bakugou's crazy adventures. He always had, since day one. They kept each other in check most of the time, yes, but that was saying little to nothing when it came to the overpowered top 2.

Chapter 55

Chapter Notes

Happy New Year, everyone!
Let's hope 2021 turns out to be a better year than the previous one. We do have the 5th season and a new movie to look forward to for BnHA this year so that should give it 10 or so "happiness points" already, right? :3
As for my side, let's see how many ongoing fics I can finally change into completed works. That's my one and only goal for 2021. Whatever else happens, happens!
Once again, I wish you all a happy New Year ＜3

"Oh! That's a nice view! Right, Bakugou?" pointed out Kirishima, his thumb gesturing towards the train's window. The train had long left Tokyo so the view was fully Chiba prefecture by now. Bakugou reluctantly lifted his eyes from the travelling magazine and peeked at the window and the outside scenery flashing past them. He loudly clicked his tongue in annoyance and looked down to the magazine once again. Kirishima groaned, "C'mon, don't be like that! Let's all have fun!"

"My definition of fun is not the same as yours. Shut up. Leave me alone," growled Bakugou as he angrily turned the page. He then proceeded in lifting the magazine from his lap and placing it right in front of his face, blocking completely the view of his four traveling companions.

"Beating Midoriya up shouldn't be anyone's definition of fun," deadpanned Todoroki, staring straight at the front and back cover of the travelling magazine.

"Says the one who nearly grilled him into charcoal yesterday," scoffed Bakugou with a certain annoyance. He once again turned to another page and softly continued grumbling to himself while he read the next articles. "He's not going to pay attention to me, they said… We won't even need to ride the same train, they also said… No one ever listens

to me and then stupid crap like this happens!!"

"I have absolutely no control over ticket sales and seat assignments…" mumbled Midoriya in his own defence, only a thin corridor separating his seat from Bakugou's.

"Did I give you permission to speak!?" roared Bakugou, immediately rolling the magazine into a tube and powerfully hitting Midoriya's head with it. "That was the second strike! One more and you better learn to fly before I kick you out of the train!!"

"..." Round tears in the corner of his eyes after the violent hit on the exact same place that had been hit the moment they boarded the same train, same carriage and ended up right next to one another, Midoriya closed his mouth and looked down to his lap. Kaminari had ended up in a different carriage so there was the possibility of them switching seats but his good, old pigheaded childhood friend had obviously declined the offer - all for the purpose of having an excuse to be angry at Midoriya. The usual, really.

"Tsk! I'm sick of breathing the same air as you morons…" grumbled Bakugou after another annoyed click of his tongue. He got up from his seat and dropped the magazine in it, moodily stuffing his hands in his pockets as he walked down the corridor towards the nearest door.

"I thought his mood had improved, since he let us eat his food again and even insisted in coming to Chiba like planned and all," said Sero, releasing a small sigh of relief once Bakugou left the carriage without exploding with anything - or anyone, to be more precise. "So why the heck is he acting all pissy now?"

"Probably because I'm here, ahaha…" awkwardly laughed Midoriya, his face already half drained of life as he mumbled those self-deprecating words.

"We all travelled to the training camp in the same bus and he wasn't acting like this," pointed out Kirishima, quickly switching to Bakugou's seat so he could offer some comfort to his classmate. He slapped his hand on Midoriya's shoulder a couple of times while cheerfully grinning at him. "It's not you, Midoriya. Don't worry about it."

"No, it's definitely me… He'll really throw me off of the train if I speak one more time…" said Midoriya, a shudder crawling up his spine despite Kirishima's best intentions. "Sero-kun… Could you give me some tape? Enough to cover my mouth and make a safety rope with…"

"Yeah, I'm not going to become an accomplice to your messed up relationship," denied Sero right away, withdrawing his body slightly closer to the window. "He won't throw you out. It's not you, Midoriya. It's just his usual angry bitching. Right, Todoroki?"

"Yeah, it's not you," acknowledged Todoroki with a small nod of his head. However, just as his three classmates were about to sigh in relief, he added, "It's all of you."

"What have we done wrong this time!?" yelped Kirishima and Sero in unison, flabbergasted expressions in their faces. To be honest, there were quite a lot of things they had done wrong in the last couple of days. But hadn't everything been left in the past the moment Bakugou had agreed to come on this one-day trip with them?

"I'll murder any third wheel that tries to breathe the same air as me. His words, not mine," deadpanned Todoroki with a small shrug of his shoulders. In all fairness, Todoroki now also felt the same way as Bakugou in that regard. He wanted their dates to be done as a couple, not with a group attached to them. The latest incidents only made him feel more strongly about it. But just like Bakugou had said, there was always something that went wrong whenever they went somewhere

together. It seemed this date's bad luck was having their classmates around.

For the time being, at least.

"If he doesn't want us around that badly, why would he say 'okay' in the first place…?" asked Kirishima, his cheerfulness taking a strong hit with that reveal. Here he was, thinking that he had finally gotten close enough to his friend for short one-day trips… but the truth was a cruel mistress indeed. "He should have just refused us like usual…"

"He doesn't hate it as much as he makes it seem," pointed out Todoroki. With a sigh, he looked to the window and the outside scenery with a certain longing. "Unfortunately…"

"Right, Bakugou never does anything he doesn't want to or doesn't like, if given the chance to choose," said Sero, crossing his arms over his chest as he softly nodded his head in acknowledgement.

"Why must Kacchan be always so confusing with his mixed signals?" sighed Midoriya, his body fully relaxing now that the threat over his life had been lifted. "No matter how many years go by, that side of him still doesn't make any sense to me."

"It seems I still have a long way to go before I can claim to be one of Bakugou's best friends!" said Kirishima, deeply touched by Bakugou's thoughtful actions. His fist clenched tight, he lifted his hand in the air while proclaiming to both himself and his classmates, "But worry not! I'll do my best to understand you more and more, Bakugou. You can count on your steed!"

I'm only making this worse on me…, inwardly groaned Todoroki, his back sliding slightly down against his seat. Todoroki wanted to keep

all of Bakugou's cute sides to himself only but when faced with a situation where others got disappointed and hurt by misunderstood words or actions, he felt the urge to correct it to not have Bakugou's good intentions smeared. He sighed. *Relationships are complicated, whichever type they are…*

"You two got any plans for the day?" asked Kirishima out of the blue, his energy and good vibes restored to 120%.

"Huh?" interjected Todoroki, waking up to his surroundings once again when he was suddenly approached with that question. He tilted his head to the left and thought about it. Apart from his request to go to the hot springs, they had not talked about what they were going to do at Chiba. He remembered Bakugou saying he'd be the one planning their trial date but could this outing be considered the said trial date? Todoroki straightened his sitting position and blurted out, "I have no idea."

"Geez, Bakugou sure is following the 'no plans, no failures' strategy to a T," snorted Sero, an amused smirk tugging at the corner of his lips. No one would expect any less from prideful Bakugou, though. He needed to be number 1 or number 1 at all times, his personal life included.

"Kaminari and I are planning to walk around the bay area before and after devouring those gigantic burgers and getting our names on the manliest wall on Earth," declared Kirishima, offering a resolute thumbs up at Todoroki.

"I'm only going to Chiba to watch the All Might screening so once that's done, I'll most likely discuss what we watched with the other fan club members," said Midoriya, his eyes sparkling in excitement at recalling a couple of All Might's action-packed moments that would surely pop up during the screening. "I don't plan to visit any other place except for the cultural centre."

"Yeah, I'm also only interested in the health products market so I have no plans to visit any other attractions in Chiba," also announced Sero, removing a folded paper from his jacket's pocket. Once he unfolded it and turned it towards his classmates, he revealed the several dozens of company names and products listed in it. "Checking all of these will take me the whole day, either way."

"Okay…?" acknowledged Todoroki, more as a question than an affirmation. It was great that they all had things to do throughout their trip but that didn't fix the fact he had no idea what he and Bakugou would be occupying their free time with.

"Stay far away from those three places and you won't have any third wheels getting in your way," announced Kirishima as a quick summary to what had just been said. "That should improve Bakugou's mood a little bit. The rest is up to you, Todoroki!"

Todoroki had been antagonising their classmates so much lately that he had forgotten that, first and foremost, they were friends sporting a healthy amount of rivalry towards one another as they aimed to reach a common objective. No matter how jealous or possessive he got, there was no changing those bonds of friendship entwining them to those closest to them. It would be quite childish to try to push them away for such silly reasons, not to mention unfair for him, Bakugou and everyone else. It seemed that Todoroki had also a lot of growing up to do, both as a future pro hero and as a person.

"Okay," said Todoroki, a small smile gently shadowing his lips. His classmates might take their pranks and playfulness a bit too far at times, but they were all people Todoroki could count on when needed. Most times even when not needed. Despite his good mood, his feelings didn't translate all that well to his face so he blankly stared at his friends while saying, "Bakugou would probably come up with a countermeasure to avoid bumping into you, either way."

"That's so true I don't even know if I should cry or laugh," snorted Sero with a roll of his eyes. "Not that he succeeds at it all the time or else he'd have gotten rid of his stalker by now."

"I might have done some dubious things in the past but I never actively stalked Ka-" said Midoriya in his own defence - or so he was aiming at. Halfway through his sentence, he realised that yes, he had actively stalked Bakugou in the past. He had secretly followed him in the street, spied on him from a distance while he fought against other children from their neighbourhood or upperclassmen from their school, and had kept all of it to himself only. Midoriya yet again spiralled down the regret lane. "Why haven't I been arrested yet…? I'm not suited to be a pro hero…"

"If you keep quiet about all of it, you might live long enough to become one," reassured Kirishima, gesturing at Midoriya for him to cut the conversation right there or he might get burnt down to a crisp once again.

"Highly doubtful," deadpanned Todoroki as a mask to hide the jealous flame blazing inside of him yet again. Talking didn't work, torturing him didn't seem to have any effects either - Bakugou's childhood friend would have to be dealt with using different methods, it seemed.

"Hey. That's my seat," said an all-too-familiar moody voice. Bakugou was back from his break and wanted to claim all that was his. Kirishima smoothly transferred back to his seat, all smiles and grins to his friend. Not a very unusual occurrence but worrying and disconcerting nevertheless. "...What's with you now?"

"Nothing. I'm just happy to be out here with you," said Kirishima, patting Bakugou's shoulder a couple of times. He then clashed his hardened fists together. "I won't disappoint you, Bakugou. I will earn a spot on that wall! Just leave it all to me! Kirishima Eijirou will today become one of the manliest men of this universe!!"

"Uh-huh. I don't care," said Bakugou with cold indifference. He passed the travelling magazine to Todoroki and gestured to him with a jerk of his chin. "You can have that back. We're gonna arrive in a bit."

As soon as Bakugou finished his sentence, a pre-recorded announcement echoed from the speakers, warning all passengers of the upcoming stop and subsequent end of the train journey. It had been close to 2 hours of travelling but they had passed by in the blink of an eye.

"Ahhhh! We're finally here!!" loudly celebrated Kaminari, his arms outstretched in the air as he jumped out of the train carriage. "My lonely journey has ended! I have arrived at burger paradise!"

"Dude, too overdramatic," laughed Sero, ruffling Kaminari's hair until it was a blonde mess and releasing small sparks of electricity.

"I'm like a carnivorous rabbit, you know? I'll die from loneliness if I'm neglected for too long," sobbed Kaminari with fake sadness, wrapping his arm around Kirishima's shoulders to demonstrate how much he had missed his travelling companions.

"But you spent two days alone in that dungeon, right?" pointed out Todoroki, exiting the train carriage right after Bakugou.

"Yeah… That chair still haunts me every night…" whimpered Kaminari, his head dropping dejectedly and arm slipping out of Kirishima's shoulders. He was nearly curling up into a ball on the floor when a knee bumped into him. "Hm?"

"Hurry up and move or I'll be the next one haunting your nights,"

warned Bakugou, his red gaze glaring daggers at Kaminari from above. It took Kaminari exactly one second to get back in shape and scurry up the stairs to exit the train station.

They checked out their train tickets and gathered together one last time in front of the station to organise themselves. A hard task as the excitement of some made it hard for them to stay in the same place for too long.

"Our train back to Tokyo is at 5:30 PM so… Should we meet here around 5 PM?" suggested Sero, glancing down at his cell phone to make some calculations. That would surely give them more than enough time to see and visit everything they wanted. It also had a time interval big enough to avoid curfew breaches, in the eventuality that any delays or uncalled for Quirk incidents happened.

"Sounds good to me!" acknowledged both Kirishima and Kaminari at the same time, which resulted in mutual high-fiving. Midoriya also nodded his head a couple of times, his brain too All Might-centred at the moment for verbal vocalizations.

"Oh. Bakugou and I aren't-" started Todoroki but a heel to his foot left him suffering in pain in total silence for the next couple of minutes.

"Yeah, that's fine for us too," said Bakugou, hitting Todoroki on the side of his torso one more time with his hand just to make sure he wouldn't say more than he should.

"Right…" acknowledged Sero with a certain hesitation after witnessing those sudden acts of aggression. Bakugou sure seemed to be in the worst type of bad moods so it truly was time to scatter around with the wind, before the tempestuous weather turned into a full-fledged hurricane and wiped them out completely. "Well, see you guys later then. Those soy sauce bottles are waiting for me!"

"Why don't we go check out the ferries by the bay?" suggested Kirishima, pointing in the bay's direction as he walked off with Kaminari. "Riding a boat after finishing the burger eating challenge would end our adventure in the manliest way possible!"

"Oh, I like the sound of that! Let's do it!" roared Kaminari in excitement, his hands rubbing together with expectation. "This will be an epic day, one that we'll remember for the rest of our lives!"

“Hm… If I'm not mistaken, I have to catch a bus to get to the cultural centre…" mumbled Midoriya as he checked the directions on the centre's website. He absent-mindedly waved at his friends as he walked towards the indicated bus stop. "See you later."

Only Bakugou and Todoroki remained by the train station, surrounded by hundreds of busy passers-by trying to reach their destinations.

"Bad mood or not, did you really have to hit me like that…?" inquired Todoroki, softly massaging the sore spot near his ribcage.

"What bad mood?" scoffed Bakugou, his lips slowly curling up into a knowing smirk now that it was just the two of them. "I'm far from being in a bad mood. Actually, I think I'm in a *really* good mood right now."

"Bakugou… what have you done this time?" sighed Todoroki with a tinge of exasperation. He knew very well what it meant when Bakugou had that mischievous glint in his eyes and his smirk turned into a villainous sneer.

"I miscalculated a bit, you see?" said Bakugou, his mischievousness

only becoming more apparent in his features as he amusingly lifted two fingers. "In total, it only took me 20 minutes to ruin their day. I can't wait to see their faces when we meet them here later. Hehehehe!"

"....."

"What? I told you half an hour and a bit of multitasking was more than enough to teach those idiots a lesson," said Bakugou, an eyebrow getting slightly arched on his brows when he noticed the blank expressionless on Todoroki's face. "I did it in less time than expected so why are you looking at me like that?"

"I'm experiencing a lot of mixed feelings right now so give me a couple of minutes," deadpanned Todoroki after a small, masked sigh. Like promised, Todoroki returned his usual expressionless after he interiorised the existence of Bakugou's unknown revenge plan - part of him wanted to know what exactly had Bakugou done in 20 minutes that could ruin their plans, especially since he hadn't noticed any unusual occurrences so far and Bakugou had always been with them, save for the few minutes he was walking around the train on his own; but the biggest part of him just wanted to put that subject aside and enjoy his date with Bakugou. So that's what he did. "Do you have any places you want to visit?"

"There's only one place I'd want to go in Chiba, no?" snorted Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. "But first, we have some hot springs hunting to do. That's the last step of *our* payback. After that, my time is all yours."

"I'm craving for the lost travelling hours now," confessed Todoroki, his brain going to la-la land as they departed from the train station. "If they hadn't been around, you wouldn't have to be pretending to be in a bad mood…"

"If they hadn't been around, we wouldn't have come to Chiba today at all," pointed out Bakugou with a small shrug of his shoulders. "Not only are they easy to deceive, but they're also a good source of excuses."

"If you want to go on a date, you can just say so," chuckled Todoroki, shortening the distance between them to rustling clothes only. "Any excuse is a good excuse but we can go out even without one."

"Shut up… That's not what I meant…" grumbled Bakugou, lightly hitting Todoroki with his elbow. "Now hurry it up! There's not a lot of hot springs with accommodation around here so the faster we find a place to stay, the faster we can officially start the date."

"Okay," chuckled Todoroki once again. He took the travelling magazine from his backpack, for easier navigation and guidance and opened it in the Chiba prefecture section. Seeing all the places they could visit next to the featured hot springs, Todoroki tilted his head in wonder. "I know you want to get our sleeping arrangements done first but where exactly are we going for our date? I'm curious."

"We're going to take a hike to hell and back," announced Bakugou, his mischievous smirk returning in full to his features.

“Eh…?” gasped Todoroki, rooted in place the moment he heard the word ‘hell’ come out of Bakugou’s mouth.

Knowing Bakugou, that could either mean they were about to have one hell of a good time or that hell was about to break loose.

Chapter 56

Chapter Notes

> Every single place in this chapter is real. Once the world calms down and if you have the opportunity to visit Chiba, do consider having a TodoBaku date too ;3

"This doesn't seem to be too hellish," pointed out Todoroki, his head slightly cocked to the left as he observed the map on the small rectangular billboard.

"Of course it isn't! Chiba has no mountains, only baby-sized hills," scoffed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. He gestured with his thumb towards the several routes they could take to hike across Mt. Nokogiri, one of the locals-favourite 'mountain climbing' spots in the prefecture. "It can't get any more beginner-friendly than this."

"I can't tell if you're mocking me or being nice," deadpanned Todoroki, taking a quick sideways glance at Bakugou before he returned his gaze to the map. Either way it went, it was a predictable dating spot for Bakugou to choose - he had done the same during their shopping date for futons, even if it had only been as a way to pass time and wait for the stores to open.

"I'm doing neither," said Bakugou, his eyes also closely observing the map as he tried to decide which route was the best (read: more challenging) for them. "I have no interest in stupid food challenges or food in general, I do all the shopping I need weekly and could care less about special markets, and no way in hell would I ever go to a dumb hero screening filled to the brim with shitty nerds. In other words, I have no freaking reasons to come to Chiba apart from this thing over here."

So he says but he was easily tricked into coming here when Kaminari started rubbing him the wrong way, inwardly deadpanned Todoroki, a

small sigh escaping from in between his lips. A part of him knew that Bakugou was right, however. He didn't have any special interest in Chiba either, all he wanted was to go on a date with Bakugou, with extra points attributed to it if it included the desired hot springs visit.

Said extra points had already been successfully acquired. It had been surprisingly easy for them to book a room for one night at one of the inns featured in the magazine. Perhaps out of being a weekday or an out-of-season holiday, they had even gotten a discount and landed on a spacious Japanese-styled bedroom, big enough to accommodate more than two people. They could only do the check-in during the afternoon so Todoroki and Bakugou decided to move on with their date plans and got inside of another train, travelling all the way to one of the beginning hiking spots of Mt. Nokogiri - which was located far, far away from the four third wheels that had come with them.

A quick visit to a convenience store for food and water supplies later and here were they, gawking at a map to decide which way to go.

"Okay, this one will do, with the amount of time we have," announced Bakugou, tapping his finger on top of the middle route. "We get to pass by all of the important spots and it connects with the ropeway. It should be a piece of cake to get back to the train station by 5 PM, hehehe…"

"You still haven't told me what you've done to them," said Todoroki, suddenly remembering Bakugou's secret revenge plan. With only 20 minutes to implement it, would it really be that impactful of a payback? *Well, it's Bakugou so it should hurt them in some way…*

"You'll find out later," sneered Bakugou, his lips curling up into a mischievous smirk. He gave a small jerk with his chin and pointed at the path they should take. "C'mon, let's go. Payback later, a trip to hell first, right?"

"That wording sense again?" chuckled Todoroki, following right after Bakugou.

With their large repertoire of disastrous outings, one would have expected Bakugou's words to raise a red flag or two. Maybe even both of them were expecting the same, hence the wording sense. If something was to go wrong, it was better if it went wrong right now, at the very beginning. However…

Climbing Mt. Nokogiri turned out to be the most peaceful hike Bakugou and Todoroki had ever experienced in their whole lives.

The mid-fall sun shone brightly over their heads, protected by yellowed leaves and some already completely naked branches. The air was cold but it was the perfect temperature to fight off the accumulated heat in their bodies from all the exercising. Todoroki had a bit of a hard time keeping Bakugou in check once they passed by the abandoned Nokogiriyama Quarry ("This is what a dungeon should look like! I'm gonna drag that freaking terrorist wannabe out of jail and get him to change this thing for me! Then he'll see how they really bite! AHHHH!", Bakugou had roared as Todoroki pulled him away from one of the hundreds of entrance holes to the old quarry) but they successfully managed to reach the observation deck within the scheduled time.

"The world sure is big, huh?" marvelled Todoroki as he munched on a rice ball, his eyes stuck to the magnanimous view before them. "Yet it looks so tiny from up here. Even Mt. Fuji looks small. It makes one think about life and ourselves, doesn't it?"

"Try to sound deep and philosophical when you're not stuffing your face with food," snorted Bakugou, gently removing a grain of rice from Todoroki's cheek. He licked the grain from his fingers and continued eating his portion of the rice balls. "Stop acting all stuck up and eat. And apologise to Mt. Fuji while you're at it! Do you have any idea of how rare it is to see that freaking mountain from a distance!? You

should be celebrating that it's not a blurry smear of white mist and clouds!"

"Sorry, Mt. Fuji," said Todoroki with a monotone voice, his head bowing just the slightest in the mountain's direction. He then continued to enjoy their small lunch break, his eyes jumping through Tokyo and the buildings in it that he was used to looking at from below only rather than from above and from a distance. A small smile popped out on his features. "I think I'm starting to understand why you like mountain climbing so much."

"Yeah?" mumbled Bakugou, drinking half of one of his bottles of water in one go right afterwards.

"You get to look down on a lot of extra characters whenever you reach the top of a mountain, right?" pointed out Todoroki, expressionlessly staring at Bakugou. He nodded in acknowledgement to his reasoning. "Yeah, that's definitely something you'd enjoy doing regularly."

"Fuck no!" yelped Bakugou as he hit Todoroki's head with his water bottle. "Okay, yeah, that thought crosses my mind now and then but that's the stupidest reason I've ever heard for climbing a mountain! I do it for the challenge. If you don't climb a mountain with your own legs and your own strength, no one will do it for you, right? Reaching the top of a mountain and then having the privilege to look down on the rest of the world is a personal victory and achievement. It's something only you can do. And something no one will ever be able to take away from you, no matter how many have climbed the mountain before you or how many more will climb it after you. I reached the top, I was here and I got to see everything that’s below. That's all."

"Bakugou… You're so cool," said Todoroki, his heart speeding up a couple of beats. If Kirishima had heard that speech just now, he'd surely be weeping manly tears about Bakugou's manliness. He wasn't a manliness-advocate like him but even Todoroki could recognise Bakugou’s words as inspiring and motivational. It tickled at his

competitive personality and made him feel starved for more victories, other tops and new heights. And if it was with Bakugou by his side, even better. "Have you climbed a lot of mountains?"

"A fair share, I guess," said Bakugou with a dismissive shrug of his shoulders. "My folks have to travel around Japan for work at times. They dragged me with them whenever I was on break from school so I used their business trips as a way to sneak around behind their backs and climb a mountain or two on my own. Though the old hag's nagging was a pain in the ass whenever she found out about it so I stopped doing that by the time I reached middle school."

An elementary school student climbing mountains alone after sneaking out during a trip with his parents…, inwardly deadpanned Todoroki, one of his eyebrows slightly arched. No wonder Bakugou had felt no hesitation about sneaking into the school grounds through a hole in the wall, he had plenty of experience in that regard with his own parents. *Maybe I should start going on runs too, even if just to make sure he doesn't find another backdoor in and out of school and keeps it a secret from everyone. We all know how well it usually turns out when he does.*

"Hey, I have the feeling you were just thinking something incredibly annoying about me just now…" growled Bakugou, his gaze tightening in suspicion as he closely observed Todoroki. "If you're done eating, then let's move on to the next spot. We don't have the whole da- ...Wait, I guess we *do* have the whole day. Anyway! Get that ass moving already! There's more hiking to do! This view should be nothing compared to when we peer down on hell!"

"Wording, Bakugou, wording," reminded Todoroki, chuckling to himself as he sorted the wrappings of the rice balls and empty water bottle, and stored them inside of the convenience store plastic bag to later throw them out in the trash.

"That ain't my wording, it's what everyone says about it!" pointed out Bakugou, mischievously sticking his tongue out at Todoroki. "Now

hurry it up, you slowpoke!"

So cool yet so quick at switching to cute, inwardly sighed Todoroki in relish, giving a small run to catch up with his adorable lover. When Bakugou had said he was in a good mood, he really wasn't lying. Usual snarky words and frowning features or not, Bakugou had gained a certain childish adventurous spirit the moment they started climbing the small mountain and Todoroki was loving it.

It made him feel sad that he couldn't enjoy his early childhood in the same way. It made him feel jealous of Midoriya and how he had gotten to go on similar adventures with Bakugou before him. But most of all, it made him appreciate and savour the experience all the more, perhaps because he was aware that he had already broken free from what kept him chained as a child, perhaps because all of it was being done together with the person he fell more and more in love with the closer they got.

"I love you, Bakugou," ended up blurting out Todoroki, a soft smile on his face as he walked behind him.

"Argh! Shit…!" cussed Bakugou, his hand grabbing onto a nearby tree the moment one of his feet slipped on a loose rock and nearly tumbled down the descending dirt path. He leaned his head back and angrily shouted at Todoroki, his entire face beet red as he peered at him from below. "What have I told you about spouting sappy crap out of the blue!? HUH!?"

"Sorry," apologised Todoroki amidst chuckles. He offered Bakugou a hand to help him get back up but the moody blonde obviously ignored it and continued walking while grumbling under his breath. "When can I say it, then?"

"How the heck would I know!?" hissed Bakugou, his hands awkwardly

adjusting his small backpack. "But it's definitely not right now, you moron!"

I'll save it for later then, inwardly conceded Todoroki, the small smile sticking to his lips as he spotted an endearing shade of pink colouring Bakugou's ears.

After going down countless stairs and steps and then climbing just as many, Todoroki and Bakugou reached the main touristic points of Mt. Nokogiri. After paying their entrance fees, they joined countless other tourists and locals appreciating the colossal views.

"That's big…" mumbled Bakugou and Todoroki at the same time, their eyes slowly climbing up the tall carving in a gigantic wall of rock. Todoroki tilted his head as he observed the intricate relief. "How long do you think it took them to do this?"

"Years, definitely," said Bakugou with a small shrug. In his own way, he praised the hard work of past generations. "Stupidity wasn't born last year. Whoever did it was definitely plagued with working with idiots for years to make it."

After walking some more and climbing even more stairs, they finally arrived at the true star of the show - at least as far as Bakugou was concerned.

"This is it! This is the hellish view I've been craving for throughout this whole climb!" yelped Bakugou, his upper body leaning over the metal railing around the 'View of Hell' rock formation jutting out from a massive, acrophobia-inducing cliff. It was high enough for instant death if one was to fall off of the edge.

"I don't mean to rain on your parade but maybe you shouldn't be

leaning so much on the railings," advised Todoroki, feeling conflicted between wanting to preserve the satisfied smile on Bakugou's face as he basked in his achievement and wanting him as far away from a quick dive to hell as possible. Bakugou was probably far too hyped up to see it but Todoroki's cool personality made it easy for him to understand why the rock formation had been named 'View of Hell'.

"Wussy," snorted Bakugou as he straightened his body and slapped his hand a couple of times on the railing. "This is nothing compared to the Trolltunga!"

"The what…?" repeated Todoroki, a question mark floating around his head as he tilted it and stared at Bakugou in utter confusion.

"It's a rock formation in Norway similar to this one but a shit ton of times bigger, higher, harder, everything!" explained Bakugou, leaning once again on the railing but with a far safer approach. He crossed his arms over the cold metal and calmly enjoyed the view over both forest, cityscape and sea. "It's at a full-fledged mountain, one that is buried in snow most of the year. It's a 10-hours hike to reach it, with no shelters or lodges along the way. You bring your own camping gear or you sleep in the middle of the snow with the wild animals. And the rock formation is nothing like this tiny one! That shit is way larger and higher than this one but has no safety railings, no nothing. You slip and fall, you're done for. Man, I wish I could hike that one…"

"Let's do it," said Todoroki all of a sudden, which earned him a confused 'huh?' from Bakugou. "Snowy mountains sound great. I never went camping, though, so I don't really know how that works."

"...I never said I wanted to go with you, did I…?" pointed out Bakugou, once again straightening his standing position. Much like Todoroki's words had come out as a surprise to him, Bakugou's words had shocked Todoroki to the point his body froze completely and his face became a textbook example of 'I was just rejected in a way I never knew possible'. Bakugou burst out laughing at seeing all of that.

"Ahahahaha! What the hell? Did you just go crazy in the head or something? Ahahahahaha! Shit, better get out of here or I'll laugh my ass off of the edge. Pffft…"

"...? What did I do?" asked Todoroki, slowly removing himself from the rock formation and back into more solid ground together with Bakugou. "I don't think I said anything that unusual."

"Nah, it's your damned face," said Bakugou, taking a couple of deep breaths to calm himself and stop laughing. "The moment I said I wasn't counting on you going, your face went from that fuckin' annoying blank to complete doom. Pffft… That was a face I'd expect to see from Dunce Face or Kirishima. But from you? Shit, that was hilarious!"

Only Bakugou would ever consider an expression like that to be funny, inwardly deadpanned Todoroki, his face also returning to his usual expressionlessness. After a small sigh, he asked, "Why aren't you counting on me going?"

"Do you think pro heroes have enough days off to go on a trip to Norway?" asked back Bakugou once he regained his usual stoic composure. "There are hundreds of nice mountains I'll never get to climb. So in exchange, I'll be hoarding the best one for the rest of my life once I go pro. The number one hero title will be mine forever! Heck, I'm gonna be an even bigger number one than All Might was! Sucks to be you, Todoroki. That's the one mountain I will never share with you. So whoever gets there first, wins it all and gets to look down on the rest of the world."

"I'm not planning on losing that battle either, Bakugou, so maybe you'll have so much free time, you'll get to visit Norway once or twice a year after going pro," said Todoroki, not backing off on the challenge in the least. Rather, the blatant war declaration only made him more eager for it. Bakugou always knew the best ways to get him burning up for more, in several different senses of the word.

"Heh! Bring it on!" declared Bakugou, a smug smirk creeping up into his lips. "You better start getting used to being kicked to the curb twice a year."

"Likewise. If you do it now, your pride will take fewer hits along the way," said Todoroki, his lips also curling up into a small smirk.

"Dream on, asshole!" scoffed Bakugou, flipping the middle finger at Todoroki before they continued climbing down Mt. Nokogiri.

Since they were on a schedule to return to the main train station in Chiba, they decided to pay a quick visit to the gigantic Buddha statue (with a second reenactment of 'That's big' from both of them as they gawked at the mammoth-sized seated carving) before they got on their way to the ropeway.

"I got the tickets," announced Bakugou, flashing two small rectangular tickets to his travelling companion.

"I got some food and drinks," said Todoroki, likewise showcasing the two cans of juice and the two skewers of dango on his hands. "I got juice but would you have preferred something warmer? It's getting pretty chilly up here."

"Juice's fine," said Bakugou, exchanging one of the ropeway tickets for a can of juice and a skewer of dango. "The next one is gonna arrive in 10 minutes. ...What are you looking at, fleabag?"

"There are a lot of cats next to the ropeway, huh?" noted Todoroki, also glancing over to the cat looking at the two of them from a distance. He sat down on a nearby bench, the seat on his left getting

readily occupied by Bakugou. From that position, he could spot five more cats, some snoozing away, others attentively observing the visitors.

“I ain’t sharing my food with you so go make kitty eyes to some other idiot,” grumbled Bakugou as he opened his can of juice and took a couple of sips, always keeping the staring cat under his gaze. He sure didn’t like the smug look the damn stray was throwing at him.

“That or we just stole its napping spot,” said Todoroki, biting off the first dango from his skewer. Since he got a traditional Japanese sweet, perhaps he should have bought a bottle of tea rather than canned juice from the vending machine.

“Finders keepers,” scoffed Bakugou with disdain. As he was about to take the first bite to his skewer, the previously motionless smug cat started running in their direction and lept towards Bakugou. Luckily, Bakugou was known for his fast reflexes so he lifted his hands in the air before the stray cat could knock down either his food or drink on the ground. “Hah! Better try next time, you sneaky little minx! ...Wait, huh? The heck you think you’re doing!?”

“Yeah, I think we stole its napping spot,” deadpanned Todoroki, doing his best to not laugh on Bakugou’s face as the cat comfortably snuggled up on his lap and proceeded with ignoring all of his attempts at pushing it away.

“I’m no chair, much less a heater!!” hissed Bakugou, shaking his legs around to try to expel the furry intruder on top of him. As he was about to poke the cat with the end of the dango skewer, he halted. “Huh… It’s not that bad to have a cat on my lap…”

“Bakugou, can I take a photo?” asked Todoroki on auto-pilot, unable to resist the adorable words that had just escaped Bakugou’s mouth

and the visuals of a smug-looking cat cuddling on top of a cat-like moody koala. He placed his can on the bench next to him and took his cellphone out of his pants' pocket.

"Fuck no!" angrily barked Bakugou as he ripped a dango from his skewer with his teeth. He grumbled as he munched the round sweet dumpling, his other hand unconsciously reaching out to the warm cat as he held the juice can on it. "Has the Shitty Nerd been rubbing off too much on you? I want no more photos of me floating around through unknown cell phones and cameras."

"I wasn't going to share them with Midoriya and the others…" confessed Todoroki, his shoulders slumping down in disappointment. "But okay… Since you don't want to… If you really don't want to… I won't take any photos. Unfortunately…"

"Ugh… F-Fine! But just one, okay!?" ended up caving in Bakugou after a couple of gruelling glances at Todoroki. Frozen shocked Todoroki was hilarious but his puppy-kicked-by-the-owner expression wasn't as amusing to look at.

"Thanks," said Todoroki, his disappointment readily flourishing back to his usual expressionless. He scooched slightly closer to Bakugou and positioned his cellphone in front of them and the feline intruder.

A sour look on Bakugou's face or not, that photo had just become one of Todoroki's favourites.

"Happy now…?" grumbled Bakugou, grudgingly biting off one more dango from the skewer. When no answer came, he slowly took a sideways peek toward him. The pensive expression on Todoroki's face as he stared at his cellphone's screen made him fully turn his head. "Todoroki?"

“I should have taken more photos today…” whispered Todoroki under his breath, albeit loud enough to be heard by his next-door neighbour.

“I knew it!! He really has been rubbing off on you!!” roared Bakugou, quickly swallowing the last dango ball before he pointed his skewer at an invisible target. “Just you wait, stupid Deku! I’m gonna fucking slaughter you when we get back to the dorm! You ain’t gonna taint others with your damned stalker behaviour, that I can fucking guarantee you!!”

“No, that’s not it,” explained Todoroki, looking at the photo on the screen fondly. “My mom and my sister used to take a lot of photos in the past. I even have an album back in my room with some of them. But my mom can’t take any photos while at the hospital. So I suddenly thought about sending her some together with my letters.”

“Oh…” said Bakugou, his explosive outburst immediately cooling down. He sipped a little bit more of his juice while softly stroking the back of the purring cat’s ear. “Just take the photos from now on, then? It’s not like we’re gonna go back to the dorm today. You have loads of time to take photos of Chiba. Not of me, you douche! Quit turning the camera my way!”

“Tsk…” With that soft click of his tongue, Todoroki lowered his cellphone back to his lap again. He leisurely ate the last two dango dumplings from his skewer as he observed Bakugou gently petting the stray cat he had been glaring daggers at just a couple of minutes prior. *He’s really into spoiling others once he warms up to them.*

“Oh, shoot! We gotta go or we’ll have to wait for the next one once again,” yelped Bakugou once he spotted the time on Todoroki’s cell phone. He picked up the snoozing cat from his lap and laid it down on the bench once again.

“Thanks for the photo,” said Todoroki, quickly petting the cat’s head while on his way to the ropeway’s entrance.

“Todoroki, no stalling! Hurry it up!” called Bakugou, urging Todoroki to pick up his pace as he walked down the stairs and went towards the worker checking the boarding tickets.

“Yeah, yeah,” sighed Todoroki, giving a short run towards the ropeway’s worker. Once he got inside of the ropeway car and joined the same seat as Bakugou, he asked, “What are you rushing so much for? You need to go to the toilet?”

“Not that!” growled Bakugou, quickly slapping the back of Todoroki’s head. “We’re meeting with the four big idiots next, right? I can’t wait to see their faces. Heh… Hehehehe…”

Oh, right… I almost forgot about that…

-.-

“Shit, right in the nick of time!” sighed Bakugou as he and Todoroki crossed the train station’s ticket gates and rushed towards the same entrance area they had all agreed to meet at. He took his cellphone from his pants’ pocket and checked for any messages, just in case something had gone south and there was a sudden change of plans. There were no new messages in his inbox nor any missed phone calls.

“I think I spotted Midoriya,” said Todoroki after giving a soft nudge on Bakugou’s arm with his elbow. He gestured towards a bench by the station’s entrance, only a messy smudge of green popping out amidst the hordes of workers commuting home from their jobs. He and

Bakugou readily dived into the crowd once again and approached their classmate. “Hey, Midoriya. Ah… Midoriya?”

“Welcome back… Todoroki-kun… Kacchan…” weakly mumbled Midoriya, his face buried in the palms of his hands as he remained all curled up on the bench. “I don’t… deserve to be a… human being anymore… so please just ignore me… and let me fade… into obscurity…”

“You’re being too hard on yourself… It happens to the best…” said Kirishima in an attempt to comfort Midoriya. His words, however, backfired on him and he also fell victim to the dark, depressing mood infecting every occupant of that bench. “It also happens to the worst… To the failures… To the worthless…”

“Kirishima, Midoriya… stop talking… you’re making the bench move too much… Oh god…” softly groaned Kaminari, his upper body sprawled over the bench’s backrest. He sluggishly lifted his head but that small movement, added to the vibrations of the bench, made his stomach turn for the hundredth time. He immediately stuffed a plastic bag on his face, just in case any more vomiting was to happen.

“Get it all out before we get on the train…” advised Sero, absentmindedly staring at the sky as he gently patted Kaminari’s back. “No vestiges of Chiba are meant to be taken to our dorm today… Nothing at all… Not even a single bottle of soy sauce…”

“Ah… Did something happen to you guys?” asked Todoroki with a certain hesitation. Was this perhaps what Bakugou had meant when he said he’d make them weep in despair? But… How had he…?

“I lost my ticket… and the tickets were all sold out…” sobbed Midoriya, salty droplets raining down from in between his fingers. “None of the fan club members was willing to sell me their ticket…

I'm a failure… A disgrace… I'm sorry, All Might… I'm so sorry…"

"We failed the burger eating challenge… miserably…" groaned Kirishima, the word 'burger' automatically triggering Kaminari's gag reflex and making him vomit inside of the plastic bag.

"I lost my wallet… That says it all for someone who planned on going on a shopping spree at a market…" sighed Sero, his half-dead eyes sideways peering at Kaminari as he spilt his guts out.

"Geez, you're all a bunch of brainless losers, aren't you?" sighed Bakugou, slowly shaking his head in disapproval. He was wearing his usual resting bitch face but Todoroki knew for a fact that he was inwardly celebrating his irrefutable victory. "How the heck did you mess up big time after planning things out so carefully? You sure got struck hard by a bigass wave of bad luck. Did you perhaps piss off the guys up there above the clouds or something?"

You're frightening, Bakugou, inwardly deadpanned Todoroki, silently observing the glee hidden in his lover's red eyes. He was certainly feeling sorry for his friends' misery yet so very thankful for being on the right side of Bakugou's revenge plan. And it made him wonder… If Bakugou showed no mercy whatsoever to his own friends and classmates, what exactly would happen if he faced off an enemy or villain that had truly ground his gears? *That's too graphic of a murder scene for me to imagine…*

"Yeah, we truly had a sickening feast of bad luck served to us on a platter today…" groaned Kirishima, softly rubbing his turning and rumbling stomach. He slowly lifted his head from the bench's backrest and tried to straighten his sitting position. "What about you two…? Was this date another bust too…?"

"No, not at all," said Bakugou, 'innocently' tilting his head as he

looked down to his victims. “So far, we’ve done everything we had planned to do and have been having the time of our lives. Maybe our bad luck was transferred to you? If so, thanks a bunch for your fuckin’ sacrifice.”

“Four of us equate for Todoroki-kun’s and Kacchan’s bad luck…?” lifelessly repeated Midoriya, finally lifting his sobbing face from the palm of his hands. Sure enough, it was a disastrous mess of tears, snot and red, puffed out eyes. “Yeah… That sounds about right… We’re useless, after all…”

“.....”

Midoriya, Kirishima, Kaminari and Sero became even more deflated from life, energy and hope for their futures after hearing Bakugou’s stabbing words, which were readily followed and supported by Midoriya’s suicidal self-degrading verbal bashing.

“Hey, losers. Stall over there for too long and you’ll lose the train, you know?” warned Bakugou, turning his cellphone’s screen towards his half-dead classmates. “You lost your wallet so how will you get back to Tokyo, Sero?”

“Kirishima has lent me some money…” sighed Sero, his body the only thing still considerably woundless as he picked himself up from the bench and helped both pale, sickly Kaminari and groaning Kirishima up next.

“Will you be able to ride the train like that, Kaminari?” inquired Todoroki, worriedly remaining next to his classmate as they slowly walked towards the ticket gates.

“The train has barf bags…” sighed Kaminari, slowly lifting his

trembling hand at Todoroki to offer him a thumbs up. “Besides, my stomach is empty once again after that one…”

“Okay. I hope you get better soon,” said Todoroki after a small acknowledging nod of his head. “Ask Yaoyorozu for some herbal tea. She must have something good for nausea and heartburn.”

“You almost sound like you’re bidding your farewells to us, Todoroki-kun…” dryly chuckled Midoriya as he validated his ticket on the gate and fully entered the train station.

“That’s because we are,” announced Bakugou. Once his classmates turned back around at them from the other side of the ticket gates, he mischievously smirked while waving his hand at them. “We’re staying at Chiba for one more day.”

“...Eh?” interjected Midoriya, Kirishima, Kaminari and Sero at the same time, their mouth remaining wide open as they gawked at Bakugou and Todoroki.

“What!? Why!?” yelped Kaminari, doing his best to push his nausea aside while dashing as close as possible to the other side of the gates without crossing them again. “It was just a one-day trip, right?”

“Yeah, for you guys it was, at least,” laughed Bakugou, giving a small shrug with his shoulders. “I don’t remember saying anything about us going back to the dorm with you.”

“You deceived us!!” sobbed Kaminari, grudgingly bumping his fist a couple of times on the ticket gate. “How dare you!? We also want to spend the night at Chiba!!”

“Deceived you? You made stupid assumptions all on your own, how is that our fault?” pointed out Bakugou, a smug smirk tugging at the corner of his lips. “Maybe you should start planning out things better before going anywhere. You know, make sure you don’t miss any little detail and shit?”

“Grrr… You’re doing all of this out of spite for us, aren’t you!?” yelped Kaminari, throwing away all of his pride as he accusingly pointed his index finger towards Bakugou. “It’s because we were spying on you two and made that silly bet, isn’t it!? You two perverts just want to get it on somewhere we won’t be able to interfere!!”

“Jealous much?” snorted Bakugou with a smug smirk.

“YES! Yes, I am! Very much so, actually!!!” wept Kaminari, his upper body slumping down over the ticket gate as he cried his heart out in jealous rage. “I want a girlfriend!! I wanna go out on dates!!! I wanna have se- Mmghjhnngh!!”

“That’s enough or you’ll get arrested for yelling profanities in a public space,” immediately intervened Kirishima, covering Kaminari’s mouth right as he was about to loudly drop the S bomb in a very packed train station. “That’s Mineta’s most probable future, not yours, Kaminari.”

“Yeah, calm down. Relax,” said Sero, patting Kaminari’s shoulder a couple of times as he was dragged away from the ticket gates by Kirishima. “Girls aren’t into loud, boisterous, annoying guys. Chill out and you’ll get a girlfriend. Eventually. Maybe...”

“Um… See you two tomorrow back at the dorm, then,” said Midoriya, timidly waving his hand at both of them. He then dragged his feet as fast as possible after his other classmates.

Soon enough, they disappeared in between the hundreds of commuters.

"Hehehehe! It went as well as I had expected," snickered Bakugou, his evil smirk once again popping out to say hello to Todoroki and other passers-by. "Mission complete. Let's go to the hot springs!"

"Right… How did you do it, though?" asked Todoroki, releasing a small, masked sigh as he also turned his back on the train station and walked together with Bakugou towards their accommodation. "Just 20 minutes and that's the result? Did you perhaps hire someone to steal Midoriya's ticket and Sero's wallet? But… What did you do to Kirishima and Kaminari to mess up their food challenge?"

"You think I'd waste my money on those losers?" snorted Bakugou, slowly letting the strap of his backpack slip down his shoulder so he could grab it. He opened the main zipper and stuffed his hand inside, seemingly searching for something. When his hand popped out of its insides, it brought a wallet and a folded rectangular piece of paper alongside. "Trains in Tokyo have quite a few pickpocketers, you know? One of those jackasses tried to steal my wallet once so I had a quite educational conversation with the idiot while on our way to the closest police station. As for Kirishima and Dunce Face… They should have known better than to scarf down a large breakfast if they're planning on completing a food challenge for their lunch. Just a 'no food is to be left behind' and those two morons ate three times more than usual, hehehe…"

Truly frightening, deadpanned Todoroki in the back of his mind. The world should be thankful that Bakugou became smitten by heroes at a young age or he might have grown up to become a terrifying supervillain. Then again, harmless payback schemes like this one could be hardly called an evil master plan and, hence, were easily tinted with a pink-coloured shade once one was in love.

Even Bakugou's evil, villainous side was starting to become endearing

and entertaining in Todoroki's eyes. It was such a well-balanced mixture of good and evil that Todoroki couldn't help but slip up a little bit and become a small fledgeling of mischief himself.

Fortunately for the world, Todoroki had no plans of applying those unintentionally acquired techniques on anyone except his moody evil partner.

Chapter 57

"I don't know why but just looking at these is giving me a bad feeling…" mumbled Bakugou, a deep frown on his face as he glanced down at the yukata the hotel had provided them with.

"They look normal to me," pointed out Todoroki as he took a quick glance at his neatly folded yukata. He finished undressing his clothes and placed them inside of one of the baskets in the hot spring's changing room. "Is this your first time wearing a yukata?"

"No, it isn't," said Bakugou, his gaze tightening slightly more as he tried to figure out where that bad feeling was coming from. After a small groan, he placed the yukata back in his own basket and started undressing.

Maybe after so many accidents, incidents and Quirk-centric misadventures, he was starting to become a bit paranoid about things not going according to plan. So Bakugou decided to shove that bad feeling down the drain and enjoy the rest of their stay at Chiba.

"I'm getting training camp vibes from this hot spring," deadpanned Todoroki as soon as he slid open the door that connected the changing area to the actual bathing area and hot springs. Between the shared bath in the dorm and the open-air hot springs at the Beast's Forest, it was a slightly upgraded version of the latter, one fully built to cater to tourists and travelling workers alike every single day of the week.

"Stop jinxing us!" hissed Bakugou, quickly slapping the back of Todoroki's head before stomping his way to the washing area. He slammed one of his feet on a low, circular stool and commandingly pointed at it. "Sit. Now!"

"Are you going to wash my hair like you promised?" inquired Todoroki, not even slightly fazed by Bakugou's passive-aggressive orders. Besides, the way Bakugou softly clicked his tongue in annoyance and quietly removed his foot from the stool without further growls and roars more than indicated that Todoroki had hit the jackpot with that question. Why be afraid if what awaited him was a VIP massage-level hair washing session, right?

"Wipe that stupid blank smirk from your face or you'll be bald by the time I finish washing your hair!" hissed Bakugou, pushing down on Todoroki's shoulders to force him faster on the stool. He then grabbed the nearest shower head, checking the water temperature first and only then spraying it over Todoroki's head. "I always keep my word, no matter how bothersome it might be…"

"You've long paid off your cold soba debt yet you're still cooking for me every single day," deadpanned Todoroki, leaning his head back slightly to contribute to the washing a bit. "Didn't you once tell me you'd never cook cold soba for me again once that debt was paid off?"

"Shut up! I learned to enjoy soba in my own way, okay!?" grumbled Bakugou, his cheekbones flaring up in pink at hearing that counterargument. Now that he thought about it, he really had said something along those lines shortly after they had started dating and the portable AC-cold soba exchange was lifted. There it was again, Bakugou’s accidental shots on his own foot.

"I'm not complaining, I like it that way," chuckled Todoroki, slowly closing his eyes as he let Bakugou do his thing with his head and hair. He also wanted to do the same, but he knew it would end up becoming a competition between the two of them so he refrained himself from voicing out those wishes of his. Maybe he'd eventually get another chance to wash Bakugou with his own hands, perhaps one day more than just his hair.

"Yeah, I bet you do," snorted Bakugou with a small roll of his eyes. He

continued washing Todoroki's hair in silence, the two of them only exchanging a couple of words about it every now and then. Once he was satisfied with the washing results, he gave a wet slap to Todoroki's naked back, leaving a bright red hand-shaped mark and an echoing 'OUCH!' as finishing moves. When Todoroki threw him a tear-stained glare, he couldn't help but teasingly say, "Just in case you were starting to get funny ideas in that horny brain of yours."

I was and wasn't but that doesn't mean a hit like that will make my thoughts fly away, inwardly grumbled Todoroki as he slowly washed the rest of his body so Bakugou could catch up to him. They finished the preparations for the long, nice soak in the hot springs and Todoroki's brain was still whirling around that statement. *Am I really that horny? I thought I was normal, compared to Mineta, but was I perhaps mistaken?*

"After climbing a mountain, there's nothing like relaxing in some piping hot large baths…" sighed Bakugou in relish as he leisurely slipped inside of the large hot spring bath. Not that such an easy, newbie-friendly hike had been challenging enough to the point of getting him physically drained. In this case, it was probably the accumulation of several things - the annoying school festival, his annoying classmates and their wrath-inducing stupid stunts, and their overly long lovemaking sessions. He sighed his tiredness away once again. "Haa… Perhaps coming to the hot springs was a better idea than I first thought…"

"....."

"Todoroki? Cat got your tongue or something?" asked Bakugou when no remark, no nothing could be heard from Todoroki. When he glanced up in his direction, he was still sitting down on the hot spring's edge, only his legs submerged on the steaming water. "Hey! Earth to Todoroki!"

"Huh? Sorry, I was thinking about something," apologised Todoroki

after his body was startled by a small pinch on his lower leg. He finally slipped into the hot springs and took a seat right next to Bakugou. "What were you saying?"

"No, it was nothing special," said Bakugou, turning his head the other way with a small pout. "You can continue with your thoughts."

"Sulking again?" deadpanned Todoroki, despite inwardly chuckling in amusement. Bakugou was usually so serious and grown-up about everything, these small moments where he acted like a spoiled, petulant child were the rarest of sights. Of course there was also his whole petty, beast-like side, which could be neither categorised as serious or child-like, but that was only minor details as far as Todoroki was concerned. He released a small sigh, leisurely leaning back on the bath's wall. "I was just thinking about some things you said today."

"Still stuck on the big, fat 'no' you received about travelling to Norway?" scoffed Bakugou, lightly changing his sitting position for a more comfortable one. There weren't that many guests currently using the hot springs or bathing facilities so no restraint from him, no sir.

"Not exactly that but yeah, I guess that also counts," mumbled Todoroki with a dejected sigh, which earned him a confused sideways glance from Bakugou. "The thing about not being able to go bothers me more than the 'no' you gave me, though."

"I thought I had been pretty clear on why it's impossible to go," said Bakugou, giving a small shrug with his shoulders before he dipped slightly more underwater. "And I mean, it's not that uncommon of a thing, right? We hear pro heroes talking about the stuff they had to give up in order to become heroes all the time, during interviews and shit. It's just something that comes with the job. I might have said I really wished I could go, but it doesn't bother me that much. I much rather become the no. 1 hero than to have the time to travel around the world to climb some random mountains."

"I guess that's true," acknowledged Todoroki with a small nod of his head. After a quick silent break, he suddenly added. "But even if you don't mind, it still doesn't sit well with me."

"Huh?" interjected Bakugou, an eyebrow getting arched on his brows as he turned around to better face Todoroki.

"It's fun going out on dates with you," said Todoroki, a tiny smile starting to perk up the corner of his lips. "Whether it's just eating something at a coffee store or a restaurant, or walking around the town while shopping for something, or getting lost in the woods, having races on the beach, peering down from tall rock formations… All of that was so much fun. I liked it. I really liked doing all of those things. And I want to do them again in the future. I want to eat lots of new dishes with you and hear you say how you'd be able to cook it a thousand times better. I want to visit all sorts of new places with you, and go to the beach, explore other forests and climb even higher mountains. I'm also really curious about camping. There's a lot of things you can do outdoors while camping, right? Like fishing and eating marshmallows by the campfire. Whenever I'm with you, I get to experience all sorts of different things and learn about so much stuff. If that was to stop after we become pro heroes… Yeah, I don't think I'd like that…"

It was now Bakugou's turn to be speechless. Todoroki wasn't a big conversationalist - he more often than not said whatever he had to say with as little words as possible and then remained silent the rest of the time. That wasn't something that Bakugou disliked, as pointless, non-stop chatter annoyed him more than deep, awkward silence, but after getting used to the bare minimum conversation style, it was surprising to hear Todoroki talk so much about a single topic.

"Hey, Bakugou… Do you really think it's impossible to continue doing these things once we go pro?" asked Todoroki, his small smile dropping to a serious expression. "The current heroes are changing how things are done. And then it'll be our turn to change things even

more. The future might become worse than it currently is but with all of us working towards the same goal, I can only picture that unknown future to be much better and brighter than the one we are in now. So do we really have to discard that future where we can enjoy ourselves like we are right now while saving lives, defeating villains and fighting for our own version of justice?"

"Geez, you sure are a greedy one…" grumbled Bakugou under his breath, shifting his sitting position back to the previous one. After inwardly gnawing on the question for a couple of minutes, he turned towards Todoroki once again while loudly yelling, "It's not like I'm- ...Eh? Todoroki?"

In the few minutes Bakugou was debating on solo about what he should say, Todoroki had found a way to pass out due to overheating and nearly drown himself.

-.-

"Pffff…!" snorted Bakugou for the hundredth time. He was currently sitting down on a bench in the hot spring's changing room, his body half-dressed with a yukata and paper fan leisurely whipping back and forth in one of his hands. On top of his lap rested Todoroki's head, his body sprawled over the rest of the bench as he attempted to regain his bearings.

"For how long do you plan to keep laughing…?" grumbled Todoroki, lifting the wet, cold towel placed on top of his forehead and eyes so he could take a peek at the snickering blonde.

"I'm gonna laugh about this for the rest of my goddamned life," barked Bakugou in amusement, the sour look on Todoroki's face only making the whole situation even funnier. "Your Quirk is both ice and fire, how the heck did you pass out because of the water temperature?"

"I told you before that I'm not very good with saunas and stuff…" sighed Todoroki, adjusting the towel so that it only covered his forehead. "The hot spring was hotter than I was expecting and since I couldn't cool it down with my Quirk… that happened…"

"Pffft! Ahahahaha!" burst out laughing Bakugou, his hand momentarily halting the fanning throughout the whole laughter explosion.

In all honesty, it was a good thing Todoroki passed out when he did. Even though Bakugou had thought about what to say, he was still possibly going to blurt out all sorts of things in the heat of the moment (no pun intended). The time it took for Todoroki to regain consciousness was the exact same time that Bakugou used to further think about several things, most of them related to his relationship with Todoroki.

As far as Bakugou was concerned, there were very few who approached him, one way or another. He wasn't as dense as a certain icy-hot airhead so he was fully aware of why people avoided him or disliked his presence. He couldn't call himself an expert at reading people either but that didn't mean he didn't have a deep understanding of those that were able to stay by his side.

There had been a huge rift between Bakugou and his friends from elementary and middle school. A rift big enough that it now made him doubt if they had been truly friends or if they had simply been classmates that usually hung out together when they had nothing better to do. Bakugou being Bakugou, he was the one who could do everything perfectly, who excelled in everything he attempted to do, who aimed higher than everyone else around him. The rift between him and his friends had come about by always being the superior one, for always being looked at with admiration and awe, rather than being in a mutual standing with them. They were 'friends' but the moment Bakugou took one more step forward towards his goal and climbed his way to the position of freshman with the highest entrance

score at U.A. High School, they all but disappeared.

School changed, the people around him changed and maybe even Bakugou himself started changing during those few months he has spent at U.A. But there were some things that hadn't changed much from before.

No matter how close his friendship with Kirishima, Kaminari and Sero was, there was still a rift between them. They were classmates, they all had the same goals and hopes for the future and all of them worked as hard as they could to make it a reality. They might not have gotten along very well at the beginning but adventures and misadventures shortened the distance to the point they had perhaps become the first true friends he had ever gotten. Especially Kirishima, out of all of his classmates. But close friendship or not, Bakugou could still see that same rift from before between them. Even if just as a joke, it was common for comments about Bakugou's superior skills and high standing to fly out of their mouths. Best intentions or not, it was grating to hear 'one day, I'll become a man deserving to be called your friend' or 'I'll do my best to become as good of a hero as you already are'. Those innocent comments were like nails scratching at a blackboard - a verbal manifestation of that neverending rift between Bakugou and everyone else.

If he went on a stretch, he could even add Midoriya to the list of people that were so very close yet so distant because of that invisible rift. They had been together their whole lives, as childhood playmates, as admirers of the same hero, as inseparable classmates, as bully and victim, as rivals. But all of those years couldn't erase the rift, couldn't close it nor widen it. Midoriya could never stand on the same level as Bakugou, as the Quirkless failure he was. Midoriya could never stand on the same level as Bakugou, as the one who inherited All Might's legacy. Whether he won or lost, there was no equal standing between them. He was forever and ever the one Midoriya aimed to surpass and Bakugou would forever and ever never let him get the taste of that victory he so yearned for.

Being the number one - being the best - was cold and lonely, some

said. Bakugou already knew that very well, even if he had yet to reach the true number one spot he had been aiming for his entire life. Those praises he was showered with once his Quirk first manifested or every time he did something expected out of an adult, not a young child, were also the very same words setting him apart from everybody else. Those 'amazings' and 'he's the best' pushed him away from everybody that was deemed as normal by society's standards. Perhaps it was others themselves that decided to put that distance between them all on their own, out of feelings of inferiority, jealousy and frustration.

Yet, Todoroki was different.

Raised by the eternal number 2 pro hero to surpass All Might, taught since a young age to be different, to be special, to be better than everybody else around him - it was completely different from Bakugou's circumstances, who choose to pursue the number one spot by his own initiative, but the loneliness and hurdles must have been the same.

Todoroki was also in a league of his own. He was one of the very few students who had entered U.A. High School through recommendation rather than by the stereotypical tests and exams. And he made sure to prove his worth at every chance he got, always landing in the first few spots of every competition and exams made to date. He was one to also daily listen to their classmates grumble and moan about the large difference in strength between them. Annoying as it was for him to admit it, it was true that whenever Bakugou and Todoroki faced off against each other, it was always unknown who would come out in first and second place. That's how close in power and ability they were to one another.

As such, there was no visible or invisible rift between them.

Whether they viewed one another as rivals or friendly competitors, they were still on the same level. Todoroki could shout out that he would surpass or win against Bakugou all he wanted because he was

right there, only one step behind that acclaimed first place. And the other way around also applied, whenever Bakugou found himself scoring second to Todoroki only.

Being with Todoroki was simple, easy, with no overly complex feelings of inferiority or superiority connecting them.

Perhaps that had been the reason why Bakugou had been so quick to fall in love with Todoroki after spending a couple of days so close to him.

It wasn't every day that they could meet someone who shared the same loneliness of being the best, much less one that could tolerate Bakugou's explosive personality or feel comfortable under Todoroki's frigid expressionless.

"You're so damn lame," chuckled Bakugou, the usual frowning crease on his brows melting away into a gentle, heart-warming smile as he looked down at Todoroki. There had been no bite behind his words, it was just a light-hearted chide voiced out with carefree amusement. "If you're this prone to passing out because of water a little bit hotter than usual, there's no way in hell we'll be able to go to other hot springs. Hurry up and fix that, you weakling."

"Ugh…" groaned Todoroki, pulling the wet towel from his forehead so he could cover his eyes and then the rest of his blushing face. "Bakugou, my heart is about to explode as we speak so could you not do that while I'm feeling too light-headed to do anything?"

"Nah, that's not my style," snorted Bakugou. He leaned his upper body forward and quickly kissed Todoroki over the wet towel. He mischievously whispered, "I'm all for strike first, think later."

“You’re so unfair,” sighed Todoroki, once again pulling at the wet towel until it fell off of his face while his free hand slid against the back of Bakugou’s neck.

“You know very well I’ve never shied away from exploiting others’ weaknesses,” mischievously pointed out Bakugou right before his lips were swallowed by a tender kiss.

“You better get ready for another sleepless night,” warned Todoroki, softly wiping the remnants of their kiss from Bakugou’s lips with his thumb.

“We’ll see about that,” chuckled Bakugou as he let himself be swept away by one more kiss.

That was Bakugou’s answer to the unknowns of their future.

Chapter 58

“Stupid hotels and their stupid assumptions…” grumbled Bakugou under his breath as he folded one of the two futons that had been laid out on the tatami floor while they were having dinner and then pushed it to the corner of the room. He glared slightly at the folded futon once he was satisfied with his purge. *Hmph! Next time we stay overnight somewhere, I’m slapping them with a ‘room for two, one bed only’.*

Bakugou turned his back on the past annoyance and faced Todoroki, who was sat down on a chair by the window amusingly observing his fussy antics. He didn’t even need to voice a ‘What?’, Todoroki gave him his thoughts the moment he saw one of his eyebrows arch slightly in suspicion.

“Your petty side is also slowly starting to become adorable,” said Todoroki, leaning his back on the chair to more comfortably glance up at his approaching lover. He sighed. “At this rate, it’ll be even harder for me to keep you under control and away from trouble.”

“Shut it!” hissed Bakugou, leisurely dropping his body on the chair next to Todoroki. He slammed his hand on the round table in front of them, his frowning face much more serious than the current ambience beckoned for. “We need to talk, Todoroki.”

“Right, I forgot you don’t like to be called cute or adorable,” deadpanned Todoroki, inwardly rolling his eyes around as he turned his body slightly to better face Bakugou. “My bad.”

“That’s not it! But yes! Stop with the cute and adorable and similar shit. It’s annoying as heck!” groaned Bakugou in exasperation. He let his hand slide against the table’s surface as he brought it closer to him and crossed his arms over his chest. “We need to have sex more

frequently."

"....." Todoroki processed Bakugou's words in total silence for a couple of milliseconds. Bakugou was routinely calling him a pervert or horny but was it all just part of his contradictory personality as someone who always said or did the opposite of what is expected, Todoroki wondered as he grabbed his obi sash and started undoing it.

"Listen until the end!!" roared Bakugou, quickly lunging his hands towards Todoroki to stop the undressing process and get Todoroki's hands far, far away from his clothes. He tightly kept Todoroki's wrists pinned down on both armrests as he cussed under his breath. "And then I'm the one always jumping headfirst without thinking about fuck all…"

"Bakugou, it's just wrong to play with your boyfriend's heart like that…" admonished Todoroki, his shoulders slumping down as he remained stuck motionless on his seat. Again, Bakugou's contradictory personality and mixed signals were as confusing as always.

"I ain't playing with anything!" said Bakugou, releasing Todoroki's arms as he softly clicked his tongue in annoyance. He awkwardly crossed his arms over his chest once again while averting Todoroki's sad puppy gaze. "It's that thing, okay? Those things, actually. Other stuff apart, we don't do it *do it* that frequently, right? Because of that, we spend the whole night going at it like freakin' bunnies when we do! It's a pain in my ass like that. And in my hips and legs and back and everywhere the next morning! The worst part of it all is those stupid neighbours of ours. They might be regretting that bet they did right now but they're the type of morons that repeat the same offence time and time again once the pain they experienced before starts fading away from their brainless heads. I prefer no sex at all until we graduate than to have to listen to those idiots snickering about it behind my back and throwing me those smug glances the next morning!"

“Abstinence for over two years…?” said Todoroki, his body sinking even deeper into his chair. Bakugou might as well have gutted him on the spot, the way he was striking verbal jabs at him left and right. “I… don’t want you to think that I’m only dating you for your body… so if you don’t want to, I won’t do anything. But sorry, I don’t have confidence about not doing anything for two years… That’s impossible, Bakugou…”

“Yeah, I figured as much,” snorted Bakugou, a knowing smirk slowly creeping into his frowning features. That had been one hell of a good answer, that much he’d give to Todoroki. If he had said no, he’d have most certainly smacked the shit out of him. But if Todoroki had accepted it just like that and said okay to roughly two years of abstinence, Bakugou would have definitely gotten a room for himself only after beating the living lights out of him. “That’s why I said we need to have sex more frequently. Rather than go crazy once or twice a month, we should get a tiny bit freaky lots of times.”

“So you mean… only doing it once but several times?” asked Todoroki, trying to quickly summarise Bakugou’s proposal while pushing himself out of his bleak funk. He didn’t quite know in which world lots of sex in smaller doses was better than fewer doses of lots of sex but if the other alternative was an absolute zero, he’d take it any time of the day. Either way, this whole conversation was starting to sound more like Bakugou creating a problem just for the sake of being able to solve it than an actual complaint. That or… “Or is it that you just want more of what we’ve been doing so far?”

“Wha…!?” yelped Bakugou, his entire face immediately flushing bright red. Clouds of steam could almost be spotted if one was to take a close look at him. “N-No! Don’t start putting words in my mouth! It really is a huge pain in the ass to be walking around like that afterwards! What if it starts affecting my performance during classes!?”

“Yeah,” half-heartedly acknowledged Todoroki, his body sliding across his seat as he inched closer to Bakugou.

“And it’s also a pain in the ass having to answer the annoying questions of those stupid degenerates so the less they hear, the longer they’ll get to live!” added Bakugou, his blushing features scrunching up into a frown as the distance between them was steadily reduced to nothing. “You said it yourself that you don’t want my revenge plans interfering with our dates, right? That’s the fastest way to do exactly that!”

“Uh-huh,” hummed Todoroki with a small nod of his head. He smoothly transferred himself from his chair to Bakugou’s and his hands immediately cupped his heated cheekbones.

“And also because I like it…” mumbled Bakugou, the truth getting pried out of his mouth by Todoroki’s relentless mismatched gaze. Damn him and that stupidly handsome mug of his…

“You should start from there next time,” chuckled Todoroki, finally closing the gap between them to tenderly kiss those pouty lips. Being with Bakugou, even just talking with him, was always a roller coaster of emotions but every double dip and dive loop of the ride was worth it.

“Shut up…” mumbled Bakugou during a small intermission of their endless kiss. His hands snaked their way up Todoroki’s arms until they tightly circled his back. A single chair wasn’t the most comfortable of places for making out so Todoroki cleverly used his change of position to grab him by the waist and lift them up from the chair. Damn him and his stupid muscles too…

“Haa… I’m feeling really tempted… to drop you like you did to me during the school festival…” said Todoroki in between heated kisses, gentle nibbles and quickened breaths. He steadily walked towards the futon, his arms and hands tightly holding Bakugou against his chest while getting held just as strongly by him - the difference laid on the

fact that the moment his hands were gone from his waist and butt, Bakugou would reach the futon at record speed.

“Hah! I dare you to-” snorted Bakugou, his lips curling up in mischief. Before he could finish his sentence, however, his gaze lowered from Todoroki’s face to his neck, then to his chest, down his legs and finally his feet until his body flopped down on his back on top of the futon without any prior warning. Or better yet, there had been a warning, Bakugou just thought Todoroki didn’t have the guts to follow through with it. He pushed his upper body from the futon with the help of his arms and angrily barked, “You bastard, I’m gonna fuckin’ kill you!”

“Ah… Oops,” deadpanned Todoroki, his voice as monotone as that of a robot with artificial intelligence.

“Oops, my ass!” hissed Bakugou, gritting his teeth in frustration as he repeatedly kicked one of Todoroki’s legs. “Come here, I’ll also oops you with my fist! I think it’s about time I teach you a thing or two about what happens when you make me fall one too many times.”

Whether those words were meant as a threat or not, Todoroki wasn’t entirely sure, for all that he encountered when he went down on Bakugou was more of his passionate kisses. They undid each other’s obi sash, leaving the yukatas half-dressed as fingers touched feverish skin directly next.

“Ngh…” A small moan leaked out of Bakugou’s mouth as Todoroki kissed and licked him down his neck. He could feel his body tingling from head to toes as he continued licking and suckling on his collarbone so he brought Todoroki to a halt right there. “Hey, no more of that baby shit.”

“Why?” asked Todoroki, blankly staring at Bakugou as his entire head became a prisoner to Bakugou’s tight grasp.

“‘Why?’ What’s so fun about sucking and playing with a man’s nipples!?” angrily hissed Bakugou, his hands squeezing Todoroki’s head even more strongly.

“What’s your problem with me sucking and playing with your nipples?” asked back Todoroki, twisting his nose just the slightest at the uncomfortable pressure his lover was inflicting on his skull. He had a brief flashback of the video Kirishima had been showing around the dorm, one with a man crushing a gigantic watermelon barehanded...

“It’s embarrassing, that’s my damn problem!” confessed Bakugou, his entire face, all the way to the tips of his ears, turning even redder than before. He had told this jokingly to Todoroki before but he was certain he could truly fry an egg with how hot his face felt. So as payback for the blushing mess Todoroki made him become, Bakugou bonked his fists a couple of times on top of his head. “Do you have any idea of how stupidly embarrassing it is to nearly come whenever you go at it!?”

“I wanna see that,” said Todoroki, his heterochromatic eyes sparkling with curiosity. He readily switched from defence to offence mode and used his legs to keep Bakugou’s well pinned to the futon, just in case he tried to resort to more kicks or knee strikes.

“No, you don’t!” yelped Bakugou, panic alarms starting to go off in his brain as half of his body was rendered completely motionless in a matter of seconds. He slammed his hands on Todoroki’s shoulders and gave them a good, hard push but since he couldn’t put his back fully into it, his move hardly had any effect on him.

“Yes, I do,” insisted Todoroki. He grabbed Bakugou’s wrists, yanked his hands out of his shoulders and pushed them down on the futon. He now had all four of Bakugou’s limbs immobile - but there was little

that he could do to wipe out the flushed glare on his face. Todoroki sighed. “Don’t be like that. It’ll stop being embarrassing once you get used to it.”

“That’s something I don’t ever want to get used to!” hissed Bakugou, wiggling his body around in searches for an opening to break free. There was none - that’s what he told himself while ignoring the several dozens of ways he could think off to release both his arms and legs. He was called a war-machine for some reason and self-defence techniques had long been drilled and hammered all over his body so it could come about automatically, without a second thought. Bakugou’s body went limp at the realisation but he still grumbled, “I’m so gonna get back at you for this…”

With a small chuckle, Todoroki slowly released Bakugou’s wrists, always cautious for any side hook flying directly at his head or torso. Surprisingly, there was no such attempt. Not even when his hands caged Bakugou’s supple pecs. That was as much of a ‘go-ahead’ as he would ever get out of his cranky koala.

“Ngh…” If it had been something else touching him, some other tongue hungrily lapping at his skin, some other mouth sinking its teeth on his body, Bakugou was certain he wouldn’t think anything of it, apart from blowing up with the said thing instantaneously. But since Todoroki was the one doing all of those things, he couldn’t help but feel it and get turned on. Still, what was embarrassing was still freaking embarrassing. “Haa… Nghh…”

“Don’t cover your face, Bakugou,” said Todoroki, lifting his mouth from the wet, rosy nipple so he could peer up at Bakugou. Once he found an arm half-covering his blushing face, he promptly moved it away. That was definitely an expression he wanted to see. Todoroki gently cupped one of the sides of Bakugou’s face, his thumb tracing his slightly parted lips. The way Bakugou’s hot, slippery tongue came out to greet his thumb with a gasping sigh made a shudder go down Todoroki's spine. "So shy about some things but so good at tempting me with others…"

"Ah… Ngh…" moaned Bakugou, his lover's mouth once again dipping on his nipples. The difference was that his red eyes were now locked with Todoroki's heterochromatic ones as he devoured his prey. He could feel his body tingling in pleasure every time Todoroki nibbled and bit him, suckled his skin and added more pinkish marks to the ones left there a couple of days prior. Whenever he caught a small glimpse of Todoroki's tongue as he licked the hardened nipple, Bakugou ended up sticking his own tongue out too, licking Todoroki's thumb as if hypnotised by the sight of it. "Haa… Ngh… Todoroki… Haa…!"

You're not being fair, Bakugou, inwardly groaned Todoroki, getting even more into their foreplay at the enticing sight before him. He bit hard on the stiff bud, erupting a louder moan out of Bakugou, whose body quivered and trembled in tandem. This was supposed to be all about Bakugou but it was starting to get dangerous even to Todoroki himself. He'd better hurry turning his adorable blushing mess into an adorable wet mess.

"Ahh! Ngh… Todoro…!" gasped Bakugou, one of his hands grabbing tightly at the sleeve of Todoroki's yukata. His eyes were still glancing down at Todoroki as he leaned his face more closely against his hand. He could feel the heat in Todoroki's gaze turning up a notch higher once again, which in turn made him feel even more excited. The more turned on Todoroki was, the more it turned Bakugou on, which ultimately spurred Todoroki on even further - no wonder they couldn't pull the brakes whenever they had sex, with more beckoning for more in an exponential crescendo.

"Comin'?" inquired Todoroki, urging Bakugou further to the edge by playfully keeping his nipple on his lips as he spoke. By the mellowed expression on Bakugou's face, he was definitely close. Just one more push, then. After another suckle, Todoroki parted his mouth from the hardened bud but not for long. He made sure he pulled his thumb away from Bakugou's mouth right as he once again bit hard on his nipple, so very close to the tip, and gently pulled it.

"Ahhhh!" loudly moaned Bakugou, his back arching from the futon as he spilt his release. He slumped down once again, chest heaving at a quickened tempo while his body trembled with the afterglow of his climax. "Haa…! Haa…"

"You really came…" noted Todoroki, adjusting his position on top of Bakugou so he could take a peek at their lower halves. Sure enough, there was a pretty conspicuous wet stain on Bakugou's underwear.

"Haa… Happy now… you perv…?" grumbled Bakugou with a gasping voice. He used his arm once again to half-hide his blushing features. Yes, he was certainly ready to jump to his grave as soon as the opportunity knocked on his door.

"I guess," chuckled Todoroki, delivering a quick peck to the arm covering Bakugou's face and one more to the top of his sweaty forehead. His lips still shadowed his forehead as he whispered, "But far from satisfied."

"..." Slowly, Bakugou pulled his arm from his face and suspiciously glanced up at Todoroki. "I ain't catering to any more of your weird inclinations tonight."

"Isn't it the other way around?" pointed out Todoroki, his head slightly tilted as he looked down at Bakugou. The way he went from staring to glaring could have broken some sort of record somewhere, especially in the horror movie category. Nevertheless, he still kissed those fear-inducing features, those cussing lips, as his hand slid down Bakugou's ripped torso until it reached the elastic band of his underwear. "When you said 'one time', you meant one time here, right?"

"Heh… From diapers to adult in an instant, huh," taunted Bakugou with a mischievous smirk. He grabbed Todoroki's open yukata and

yanked him even closer to him. “I really want to screw you over with ‘one time is one time, deal with it’. But like hell, I’m gonna stop at just this. I need to wipe out all of that baby shit from my brain so we’re going for a do-over, Todoroki!”

“Just say you want to continue,” deadpanned Todoroki, blankly staring at the evil smirk on Bakugou’s face. He was still taking off his wet underwear, nevertheless, his fingers slithering down his thighs while he was at it.

“But that wouldn’t be as fun, now would it?” laughed Bakugou, teasingly nibbling on Todoroki’s chin and licking down his neck as a little jab for what he had done to him earlier. Before Todoroki could truly start getting even weirder ideas in his head, however, he dropped his arms on the futon and motioned them over his head. That position wasn’t exactly the most optimal one and he was perhaps too far away from his backpack to grab it well too so he ended up dropping his arms on the tatami floor while groaning in frustration.

“Your backpack?” asked Todoroki, leaning slightly further on top of Bakugou to reach for Bakugou’s current target (for whichever reason it might be). “I didn’t hear your phone ringing.”

“Not my phone, what I want are these,” mumbled Bakugou, inserting his hand inside of his backpack and shuffling through its contents while awkwardly lifting his head from the futon to peek inside. He raised some eyebrows when he took from his bag the usually locked away bottle of lube and box of condoms. “What? If I can pickpocket, did you think I wouldn’t be able to smuggle stuff out of your bedroom?”

“No, I’m more surprised that you’ve been walking around all day with those in your backpack,” deadpanned Todoroki, his eyebrows going back to their default spot.

“I rather walk around all day with these than go through that shit again! Especially since you’re super into getting me drop-dead embarrassed lately!” said Bakugou, face scrunching up into a frown at recalling how their usual stretching routine had gone last time they needed it. He could only get in that many embarrassing positions in a single night and coming from his nipples only occupied all of the available slots for the foreseeable future. Good thing he planned ahead and secretly smuggled those out of the dorm with him or that night would have wound up being his last one on Earth.

“I’m just trying to love you in all sorts of ways,” confessed Todoroki, picking up the bottle of lube and drizzling a little bit of the sticky liquid on his left hand. A slapping sound caught his attention as he warmed up the lube a little bit to be more comfortable to the touch. He found Bakugou covering his whole face with both hands once again. “What is it now? I haven’t even touched you yet.”

This stupid tree has no self-awareness of how destructive his words can be…, inwardly groaned Bakugou, his face once again sizzling at infernal temperatures. After a couple of deep breaths, he removed his hands from his face. He could still feel how heated his cheekbones were but he could blame it on the strength he had used to cover himself. Bakugou gave a small jerk with his chin while throwing a glance at the lube in Todoroki’s hand. “Hurry it up.”

“I should be the one saying that,” sighed Todoroki with a masked roll of his eyes. He smeared some of the lube around Bakugou’s hole before he slowly slipped a finger inside of him. The way he reflexively clenched around his finger made Todoroki shudder in anticipation for that warm tightness. He sighed once again, his voice husky with arousal. “You have no idea how much I want to put it in.”

“Ngh… Maybe you should focus your attention on areas further south next time, then,” said Bakugou, the desire still locked within Todoroki once again starting to rekindle his own. But Bakugou wasn’t one to forget; he always paid back others with the same coin. Todoroki wanted to put it in him so badly already, why not make him want it even more throughout the remainder of their preparations? After all,

when push comes to shove, he was still a motherfuckin' whore that could rival a bitchy karma. He placed his hand on top of his stomach, the large sleeve of the yukata spilling over the side of his body as he motioned it down and down. He grabbed his hard cock while making direct eye contact with Todoroki and mischievously purred, "Haa… Like here."

"...Bakugou?" called Todoroki, gulping in dry once he noticed the hand starting to pump Bakugou's cock up and down. The fingers he was using to stretch and lube his tight entrance immediately came to a halt at the sight.

"Haa… Ngh… Stopping already?" asked Bakugou with a teasing tone. He spread his legs slightly more to allow passage to his other hand and reached out for Todoroki's hand and the fingers currently inside of him. The hand jerking him off showed no signs of stopping or slowing down. He mischievously inquired further, "Or did you… ahh… just want to put… ngh… fingers in me?"

"...!!" Despite his perpetual expressionless, Todoroki's face turned several shades redder than usual and a deep frown creased his brows. And good thing he was blushing like that because if any more blood was to rush down his groin, his cock might actually explode… and not in the good, pleasurable sense. "Seriously, today you're really…"

"Ahhh!" moaned Bakugou, his body suddenly jolting in surprise when Todoroki's fingers got once again down to business and pushed further inside of him, right until they hit that sweet spot deep in him that always got his head in a haze. It felt so good that his hand completely forgot to keep up with its pace and replaced his hold on his leaking cock to grip at the messy futon. "Ahh…! Haa… Ahhh! Todo- Ahh!"

"One time? There's no way we can do it only once if you push me over the edge like this, Bakugou," said Todoroki in exasperation, collecting whatever pieces of his shattered restraint that still remained so he could keep himself in check and not pounce on Bakugou right

away. Something extremely hard to accomplish with the way Bakugou was crying out in pleasure while greedily swallowing his slick fingers. The last thing he wanted to do was hurt Bakugou in any way or shape so he tried to reign himself in with the first quick fix he could think of: his lips.

"Haa! Mmhn…!" When Todoroki leaned closer to him, Bakugou didn't think twice about opening his mouth to him. Kissing felt good and it kept him from making those embarrassing noises that had gotten them in so much trouble already. They weren't at the dorm and the hot springs they were at didn't have that many guests currently staying there but one could never be too sure. Their lips came apart with a wet sound, connected by a thin, shiny thread of their intertwined saliva that only broke once Todoroki feasted on a second, much shorter kiss. The intensity of the kisses might have gone slightly down but their arousal was far from being satiated. "Haa…! Ngh… Aha… Ahaha… That's… haa… quite the face you're… ngh… making there… Todoroki…"

"You think?" said Todoroki with a small tinge of sarcasm. He carefully withdrew his fingers from Bakugou's wet hole and meticulously thrust them in once again; the walls around them had become much looser compared to before. Bakugou's voice sweetly rang close to his ears as he did so, testing once again his ability to hold back. With a small, shaky breath, Todoroki sat up on the futon and gently removed his fingers from inside of Bakugou to reach out for the condoms. "Whichever way I look… it's all your fault."

Ah, so this was the bad feeling I was having earlier, Bakugou noted in his innermost thoughts as soon as his heart started beating like never before. Had it been Todoroki's words once again sending an arrow straight at his heart? No, it had not. His bad feeling turned out to be his growing weak spot for Todoroki wearing, shall we call it, eye-catching clothes.

The sight of Todoroki, with his half-undone, dishevelled yukata that left little to the imagination, as he ripped the condom's wrapping with his teeth while lowering the underwear clothing his bulging erection

was too much for him to deal with. Worst yet - or perhaps better yet? - had been the way Todoroki looked in his direction while pushing his hair back with his fingers. Those ravening eyes sure could melt Bakugou inside out into a mess of thundering heartbeats and stolen breaths.

“Can I put it-” asked Todoroki but his question was cut short when a hand strongly yanked at his clothes. He toppled down on top of Bakugou, his quick reaction to break his fall with his hands the only thing stopping them from crashing directly with one another. Before he could ask him what was the problem now, Bakugou sealed his lips with a hungry kiss, his tongue quickly finding its way inside of his mouth. His arms wrapped around Todoroki’s back, hands pulling the dishevelled yukata even further down his body with rushed movements. It was Todoroki’s turn to get breathless once the mind-numbing kiss came to an end. “Haa…! Baku-”

“Hurry up… haa… Todoroki…” gasped Bakugou, cheeks flushed with a light blush, eyes slightly dazed with arousal. One of his hands climbed to the back of Todoroki’s neck and gently pulled him closer. Even the sensation of his cool hair brushing against his fingers felt out of this world. “Today’s holidays for us… Haa… We can start the ‘one time only’ rule… once we return to the dorm. So hurry up and put it in alrea-aahhh!!”

Todoroki didn’t even wait for Bakugou to finish. He grabbed his slender hips and lifted them from the futon as he pushed his weight down on him. Finally feeling that tender tightness around his cock nearly elicited an orgasm out of Todoroki after only one thrust but there’s no way he’d let that sweetness end so fast. Just to make sure, he asked, “No holding back…?”

“Haa… No… holding back,” acknowledged Bakugou, a small smirk curling up the corner of his lips.

Moans and erratic gasps leaked out of Bakugou’s mouth when

Todoroki started rocking his body, more slowly at first but quickly picking up a faster pace as both lost themselves in each other's embrace. The way they could so easily piece themselves together with their bodies made their hearts grow even closer. So much so that every small touch, every small change in their expressions, every little thing could bring more out of them in their passionate entanglement.

"Bakugou…!" gasped Todoroki, eyes stuck to the sexy panting mess underneath him. Whenever he thrust a little bit more strongly and pierced his insides balls-deep, Bakugou would clench around his hard shaft in a throbbing bliss. And whenever Bakugou did so, Todoroki was driven into doing it all over again. Bakugou had admitted that it felt good whenever they did it just like this, shouldn't Todoroki do the same? "Haa… Bakugou…"

"Huh…? Ahhhh!" Bakugou barely noticed it when Todoroki's hands tightened around his waist but he sure became aware of his intentions when he pulled him off of futon and had him sitting right on top of his cock. He hugged Todoroki for dear life in reflex, both to keep himself from falling backwards on the futon and to seek more solace for his turned on body. But, unlike his expectations, Todoroki didn't continue moving at all. "Ngh… Haa… Todoroki…?"

"Bakugou, I'm going to say right now what I couldn't tell you before," said Todoroki after taking a couple of deep breaths to even out his breathing rhythm while speaking. He gently cupped Bakugou's heated face and warmly smiled at him. "I love you. I really love every part of you. I love your ridiculous pettiness, I love your childish sides when you're out and about, I love your prideful competitiveness against everyone around you, I love your evil personality and plans. And I love how gentle you are, I love how you always give it your best, I love how rightful you are and how you won't hesitate to punish others when they cross the line, even if they're your friends. I love the way you make me feel inside and I love how it feels to be inside you. I love all of that about you and I'm sure I'll get to love even more sides and parts of you in the future. So never let go or stop loving your tree, okay? Because I have no plans of ever letting go of my adora- ah, I mean, really cool koala for the rest of my life."

“That was a really shitty save…” mumbled Bakugou with a mild pout, his cheeks even more flushed than before. Not that neither he nor Todoroki could see them, given the position of his hands on his face. “You’re so damn unfair… There’s no way I can top something like that.”

“I’m not trying to make a competition out of it,” deadpanned Todoroki. Two sweet-scented hands circled his wrists and pulled his hand away from Bakugou’s face. His lips were kissed once again - it was a gentle, fleeting kiss but it stole Todoroki’s breath away nevertheless.

“There’s no way I’d ever let go of such a handy portable AC and heater,” said Bakugou in a whisper, right against Todoroki’s lips. “Oh, and because I love you too, I guess.”

“Like I said, you should start from there,” chuckled Todoroki, gently bumping his forehead against Bakugou’s. That had been such a Bakugou-like reply that he couldn’t even get angry or frustrated at it. It was yet another part of him that he loved to bits, after all. Still, there was something else that he was still very much frustrated about. He pulled Bakugou’s yukata down his shoulders and slid it off of his arms, throwing it out of the futon as soon as it had been fully removed. “Small break’s over.”

“Ngh… Ahh!” moaned Bakugou, his body shuddering from head to toes as Todoroki once again resumed with his thrusts. He also rocked his hips in tandem with his movements, taking advantage of their new position to give his leaking cock some further stimulation by rubbing it against Todoroki’s abs. But what was truly satisfying Bakugou the most was being so close to Todoroki. He was right there, just a couple of inches separating their panting chests. He could easily wrap his arms around his neck and erase that distance, he could easily kiss his warm lips and taste the flavour of his tongue and, again, erase that distance. And that’s what he did. “Haa… Ahh… Todoroki… I… ngh… take that back…”

“Mmhn!?” Todoroki was kissed by Bakugou so suddenly that he nearly fell backwards on the tatami floor, such had been the amount of whomp put into the out-of-the-blue glomping.

“I… haa… I love you,” said Bakugou, victoriously grinning at Todoroki. There, he had erased the distance.

“Ngh…! Ah…” Todoroki could feel his body tingling all over, his love for Bakugou bursting out of him in the form of an orgasm. He dropped his blushing features against Bakugou’s shoulder while he tightly wrapped his arms around his waist. That smiling expression truly was a one-strike killer, just like its owner.

“Huh…?” interjected Bakugou, his arms left awkwardly hanging over Todoroki’s shoulders after that sudden shift in position. He gave a couple of taps to his back, trying to catch the attention of his cuddling lover. Bakugou had nothing against his hugs but there was a certain part of his body that wasn’t being very gently sandwiched between their torsos. The fact he was still very much hard only made it even more painful for him. “Todoroki? Hey!”

“Once we return to the dorm, it’ll be just one time each…” mumbled Todoroki, his voice slightly muffled by the position of his head. He turned it sideways so he could peek at Bakugou’s inquisitive frown. “So that means we can go all out whenever we’re not staying at the dorm, right?”

“I ain’t booking a hotel room with you every weekend or something, no fucking way!” growled Bakugou, promptly slapping Todoroki’s back.

“I know,” reassured Todoroki, straightening his sitting position after a

small sigh. With just a tiny push, Bakugou toppled backwards on the futon once again together with Todoroki. He gently kissed Bakugou's forehead as he withdrew his cock from his slippery hole. Todoroki mischievously announced, his lips taking the shape of a smirk. "But in two years, after we graduate, I'll be enacting my revenge plan. Living together with you should be fun, hehe…"

"Huh? What's that supposed to mean!?" yelped Bakugou, his eyes going wide in surprise as he gawked at Todoroki. He observed his lover's movements with a certain fluster as Todoroki rid himself of the used condom and went to grab another one. "What exactly are you planning, you jerk!?"

"I'll tell you later," deadpanned Todoroki, offering the same type of answer that Bakugou had given him earlier that morning.

"Don't you 'I'll tell you later' me!" hissed Bakugou, kicking Todoroki with the heels of his feet a couple of times. "Spit it out now! What are you going to do after we graduate!?"

"You should be worrying about what I'm going to do right now," pointed out Todoroki right before he pounced on Bakugou a second time.

They greedily, tenderly sapped each other dry for the rest of the night, despite Bakugou's constant attempts to squeeze the truth out of Todoroki's mouth.

Chapter 59

“Where…?” mumbled Todoroki, blinking his eyes a couple of times as he stared at an unfamiliar ceiling. It took his brain a couple of seconds to fully wake up and remember that he and Bakugou had stayed over at a hot spring in Chiba. When he peered down at his chest, sure enough, Bakugou was deep asleep there, nearly two-thirds of his body on top of him rather than the futon. Todoroki couldn’t help the smile that immediately appeared on his lips at the sight. “Oh, right. What time is it?”

Todoroki groped around the bits of tatami floor he could reach without getting up or waking Bakugou up. He couldn’t find his cell phone anywhere from that position. Bakugou’s backpack was still relatively close by so Todoroki decided to check the time using his cell phone.

“We’re going to cut it quite close…” sighed Todoroki when he saw how late it already was. They only had 30 minutes left for check-out and waking up early after such a busy night wasn’t usually in Bakugou’s plans. Todoroki also didn’t want to disturb him when he was sleeping so soundly. With a sigh, he dropped his hand back to the futon. “What should I do…?”

If he ignored the check-out hours and let Bakugou continue sleeping, not only would they have to pay a fee for it afterwards, they’d be also inconveniencing the hotel and its cleaning staff. Bakugou hated that kind of thing, even if it meant fewer hours of sleep for him.

On the other hand, it was hard to resist not staring at the cute koala sleeping on his arms. And chest. And legs. If they had the time, Todoroki would stay right where he was, ignoring his growling stomach just so he could admire and relish on that peaceful scenario. But Bakugou would definitely berate him for it afterwards.

"I guess I have no choice but to wake him up…" mumbled Todoroki, resigning himself to the only actual option he had there. He checked the time one last time on Bakugou's cell phone and sighed in dismay.

As Todoroki stared at the clock on the screen, his eyes slowly lowered to the few buttons further below. He wouldn't be able to enjoy the moment personally but there was a method to engrave it forever in their memories, wasn't there?

With his face as blank as it could get, Todoroki leisurely swiped one of the buttons on the screen and opened the camera app, something that did not require any passwords or codes to be fully functional. He quickly scooched a little bit closer to Bakugou and with a quick click, a photo was taken.

"Midoriya really is a big influence in everybody's lives, for better or for worse," deadpanned Todoroki as he checked if the secretly taken photo had come out good or not. Objective now accomplished, he locked the cell phone's screen and put it back inside of Bakugou's backpack once again. He'd have to later think of a way to transfer the photo to his cell phone without Bakugou knowing he had been messing around with cameras while he slept.

That will be a quite interesting adventure, inwardly chuckled Todoroki, already picturing the hurdles that such a quest was guaranteed to have. Bakugou wasn't easily deceived and he had a good nose for suspicious behaviour. *Well, it will work out somehow. What I need to do now is…*

"Bakugou," softly called Todoroki, his hand carefully patting his messy blonde hair. Bakugou barely stirred in his sleep as he gingerly ruffled his head. "It's time to wake up. We need to check-out from the hotel."

"Nnn…" groaned Bakugou, lifting the futon covers over his body with

one of his hands. He then unceremoniously dropped them over his head while burying his whole face against Todoroki's chest. After releasing a long, slow sigh, Bakugou went for some more shut-eye once again.

"Hibernation mode, huh," chuckled Todoroki as he continued ruffling Bakugou's head from underneath the covers. "Since you're taking so long, we only have 20 minutes to check-out now."

"20 minutes…!?" yelped Bakugou, his whole body exploding upwards from underneath the futon. "Why didn't you wake me up earlier!?"

"I only woke up a few minutes ago myself," confessed Todoroki, also sitting up on the futon now that his body had been released. “We probably should have set an alarm clock last night.”

“Ugh, we always end up oversleeping after a date…” groaned Bakugou, his entire face scrunching up into a sour frown. Always set an alarm for the morning after a date, Bakugou engraved deep in his brain. This time was only going to be a very close call but he still resented having missed some of his morning classes when the same happened previously. With a click of his tongue, he barked, “Hurry up getting dressed!”

“Yeah, yeah,” said Todoroki, inwardly releasing a small sigh. Where had that calm, peaceful atmosphere gone to? Straight to his memories, that’s where it was now that the ferocious beast was up and about. He was picking up one of the scattered yukatas from the tatami floor when a loud scream reached his ears.

“Ahhh! Fuck!” yelled Bakugou, begrudgingly punching the tatami floor with one of his fists. On his other hand, also clenched tight and trembling slightly in anger, was his underwear, all creased and crusty after last night’s embarrassing first climax. Since it was just a one-

night stay, none of them had brought a change of clothes with them. No time left for any clothes washing now either. Which meant…

“No one will notice you’re not wearing any underwear,” deadpanned Todoroki as he casually started putting his clothes on.

“I will notice I’m not wearing any underwear!” hissed Bakugou, immediately turning his head to Todoroki to bark those words at him. “This is all your fault! You’re banned from touching my nipples for the next couple of years!!”

“Or we can buy a new pair after checking out from the hotel?” suggested Todoroki, his head slightly tilted as he buttoned his pants. “They sell underwear at convenience stores, right? We could buy it there together with some breakfast. You can even put them on there, in the toilet.”

“You’re really enjoying all of this, aren’t you?” grumbled Bakugou, his red eyes tightening even more to glare daggers at Todoroki.

“Just a little bit,” confessed Todoroki, face going completely blank. He did end up softly chuckling to himself when Bakugou flipped him the bird, however. Now that he was minimally dressed, he went to grab Bakugou’s clothes and passed them to him, seeing as he was still huffing and puffing at the sorry state of his underwear. He softly ruffled his head on his way back to dress up the rest of his clothes. “My bad, my treat.”

“You can bet your ass it’s your treat because I won’t be caught dead buying underwear from a convenience store!” said Bakugou with a hmph, snobbily turning his head the other way. Still grumbling to himself under his breath, Bakugou finally started dressing his clothes - save for that particular, very essential article of clothing.

The two of them arrived at the front desk of the hotel at the exact time the check-out ended. Luckily for them, it meant they had no extra fee to pay nor had they disrupted the cleaning staff's schedule all that much.

Once outside, they made a direct beeline to the nearest convenience store - slow as it might have been as Bakugou acclimated himself to his waddling pace.

“Any requests for breakfast?” asked Todoroki, waiting for any further info on what more he should get from the convenience store before he went in.

"Anything's fine. But get me something warm to drink," said Bakugou with a small shrug. He uncomfortably adjusted his pants with some masked movements. "Something warm but fast."

"Sure," chuckled Todoroki. He threw a quick amused glance at Bakugou’s lower half before he stepped inside of the store alone. That accidental situation was pretty hilarious for Todoroki but he could understand why Bakugou wasn't enjoying it as much. The weather was already cold enough for a single missing piece of clothing to make a difference.

Todoroki gave priority to Bakugou's comfort over his amusement and hurried his shopping trip as much as the line of customers in front of the cashier allowed him. So in a matter of minutes, he was stepping out of the store once again with a plastic bag on one hand and two cups of their hot beverages' products on the other.

"Breakfast or un-" inquired Todoroki but the plastic bag was yanked out of his hand before he could even finish. Bakugou promptly darted

inside of the convenience store and into its toilet, leaving Todoroki alone in the street with just the two drinks. He deadpanned, "Underwear first, it seems."

Todoroki didn't need to wait outside for too long either, however. Bakugou quickly resurfaced from the store, still grumbling in annoyance despite the problem having been fixed already.

"Do you want to search for somewhere to sit down and eat or should we just eat inside of the store?" inquired Todoroki in an attempt to make Bakugou's mood a tiny bit better. He couldn't say he was in a bad mood but he certainly wasn't having the best of mornings that day, with so much disastrous stuff happening one after the other. Their bad luck seemed to have returned in full already, now that they didn't have any of their acquaintances around to shove it towards (hypothetically speaking, that is).

"There should be some benches over there," grumbled Bakugou, gesturing towards the bay area with his thumb. He adjusted the plastic bag's straps around his wrist before he put both hands inside of his jacket's pockets. "Be sure those drinks don't get cold while we're walking there."

"I'll do my best," acknowledged Todoroki, promptly switching the cups from his right hand to his left one.

Todoroki and Bakugou started walking side by side towards the bay area that Kirishima had mentioned the previous day. They were still at a considerable distance from the sea but the smell of the low tide already tickled at their nostrils, carried towards the coastal area of Chiba by the mid-morning icy breeze. The previous day had featured clear skies but today's was a mixture of grey clouds with some occasional sneak peeks of light blue. There didn't seem to be any threats of rain, at least for the time being, but the air was much chillier than the comfortable temperature they relished on during the whole hike.

"We sure were lucky as heck yesterday," commented Bakugou, apparently having the same thoughts as Todoroki. "If we had caught this weather during the climb, we'd have had a rough time eating at the observation deck with these light clothes on."

"I'd have made sure to warm you up," said Todoroki, softly nodding his head in acknowledgement to his claims. "I can do it now too."

"Yeah, keep your left side completely free because I'll be using the shit out of it while we're outside," scoffed Bakugou, a small smirk remaining on his lips. "It's time I officially rename the portable AC to portable heater."

"Seasonal title change, then?" deadpanned Todoroki, blankly sideways glancing at those smirking features.

"With my Quirk, I have no other choice," pointed out Bakugou. He gestured with his chin to a nearby free bench now that their surroundings had changed from an urban area to a wide bay, dotted by benches and occasional trees and flowerbeds, separated from the sea and boats floating further away by a long, seemingly endless metal railing.

"I don't know how you like your coffee, so I went for the safe bets and bought a mocha and a latte," explained Todoroki as they sat down on a bench. He had initially placed the coffee cups on it too, right between them, but Bakugou pulled them out of the way and scooched closer to him as if a polar opposite magnet. Todoroki couldn't help but blurt out, "Are you perhaps worse at dealing with the cold than you are at dealing with heat waves?"

"It's not like I have a problem with cold weather, it just annoys me

that I can't explode with stuff at any given moment," said Bakugou, neatly snuggling the side of his body against Todoroki's warmth. "My Quirk is technically my sweat. You can see where I'm trying to get at."

"That sounds like a really big problem," deadpanned Todoroki, turning up his body temperature a little bit more with the Half Hot part of his Quirk. He didn't necessarily want Bakugou to walk around Chiba exploding with objects and people alike but Todoroki knew very well how much it bothered him to not be able to accurately control his Quirk. "What do you usually do about it? Have you found any solutions for it?"

"Yeah, I asked for some modifications on my hero costume," explained Bakugou, picking up one of the cups and checking its contents first before he started sipping on the hot beverage. He didn't have much of a sweet tooth - at least compared to some of his classmates - but he could use the extra sugar in the mocha. He smirked, "Gotta make sure I'm really toasty in it so I can vent my cold weather frustrations on the first idiot that pops up in front of me."

"What about daily life?" asked Todoroki, rolling his eyes around in a masked way. Their afternoon hero training sessions were about to get ten times more explosive and noisy, it seemed. Though Todoroki was slightly curious about this new hero costume. A little bit concerned too. He briefly wondered about what would be his reaction and his classmates' reactions upon the reveal.

"If the heat wave's shtick was accidental explosions and flash grenades, then winter's is the opposite… No explosions or flash grenades even if I want them, unless I've been moving around to the point of breaking a sweat…" grumbled Bakugou with a certain annoyance. Just the thought of it alone pissed him off, actually. Cold weather was going to be his biggest weakness once he became a pro hero, even if it only affected him for a few months a year and could be fixed by a seasonal change of costumes. Talk about lame… After another sip to his coffee, he released a small sigh, his eyes sideways glancing at Todoroki. "Don't go babbling about this to those morons… They are better behaved at the dorm when they think I can blow up

with them at any time."

"Yeah, I'll keep it a secret," acknowledged Todoroki, a satisfied smile on his lips as he grabbed the other cup. The latte must have cooled off quite a bit by now. He also pulled the plastic bag to his lap to reveal the remaining food items he had purchased from the convenience store. "I got some sandwiches too. There's one with shrimp cutlet and another with cream cheese with blueberries. And I also got some special cookies for a snack."

"That's one hell of a choice for breakfast!" yelped Bakugou, an eyebrow slightly arched in puzzlement. Had Todoroki rushed his shopping and just picked whatever from the shelves? "What's with those fillings?"

"I know, right? I wonder how they taste," said Todoroki, eyes glistening with curiosity as he glanced down on the sandwiches. "They can't be that bad if they're being sold at such a large chain store."

"Geez, this is why ignorant rich kids shouldn't be let loose in the streets," scoffed Bakugou, grabbing one of the sandwich packages so he could open it. If push comes to shove, he was also one of those rich kids but at least he had grown up running around the streets and mountains, doing all sorts of things and living life, rather than stay cloistered inside a controlled bubble world. He took half of the shrimp cutlet sandwich and gave the other half to Todoroki. "Here. Let's eat the sweet stuff last or it'll ruin the flavour of our coffees."

"Okay," acknowledged Todoroki, gladly accepting his half of the sandwich. He took a bite to the bread and the cutlet, chewed on it a bit and remarked after swallowing it. "It's good."

"Hmph! I could do it better," smugly said Bakugou, also gobbling up the sandwich.

"Ahaha. Right," laughed Todoroki. He sure had predicted that one the previous day. It just showed how well he already knew Bakugou's reactions and responses. Eyes stuck on the sea and boats in front of them, Todoroki continued leisurely eating the sandwich while now and then sipping on the lukewarm latte. "What should we do after we finish eating?"

"Beats me. I've done everything I wanted already," said Bakugou with a quick shrug. He drank the last bit of his mocha and placed the empty cup on the bench next to him. "What do you wanna do? You were all eager yesterday about taking photos for your mother, right?"

"Yeah but I don't have anything in specific that I want to take photos of. It's something that I feel like doing all of a sudden, if the moment is the right one," confessed Todoroki, glancing down at the bag on his lap. "I didn't feel like taking a photo of our breakfast and it's all new stuff I never ate before."

Yet I immediately want to do it when it comes to Bakugou, added Todoroki in the back of his mind. When they were admiring the gorgeous scenery from the observation deck, he didn't even think about recording the sight in some way. But when he saw that stray cat cuddling on top of Bakugou's lap, Todoroki knew instinctively that he needed to preserve that memory as it was, without the risk of getting faded away by the passage of time. The same had happened that morning. *Now that I think about it, my mother's and sister's photos are all about people. There are no photos of random things or places, only of random scenes of our daily lives.*

"I think… whatever we decide to do or go to, I'll find a moment I'll want to take a photo of," concluded Todoroki, softly munching on the sandwich afterwards. Yeah, that would do. For as long as he was next to Bakugou, he'd eventually bump into other photogenic scenes.

"Then… Do you want to take the long way back to Tokyo?" suggested Bakugou, hurriedly stuffing the rest of the sandwich in his mouth while turning his head the other away.

"Long way?" repeated Todoroki, his head tilting to the left in incomprehension. Chiba wasn't that far away from Tokyo, was there even a long way to get back?

"Yeah, the long way," said Bakugou while gesturing with his thumb at the sea. "We go back to the same train station we got off at to climb Mt. Nokogiri, catch a ferry from there to Kanagawa and finally a train to Tokyo. I prefer to take it easy and go back now through the long way than to try to go somewhere else and be caught by surprise by bad weather or something."

"Sure," acknowledged Todoroki. Travelling back to Tokyo by sea had a nice ring to it. It would be almost as if they had gone full circle around the entire Tokyo Bay. Plus, new experiences were always welcome. Todoroki could only wonder what Bakugou's reaction to the ferry ride would be, seeing as he had been that hyped up with the view from the rock formation at Mt. Nokogiri. Oh, now he really wanted to ride that ferry. "Let's finish eating breakfast quickly so we can go."

"Heh, no need to get your panties in a knot," snorted Bakugou, facing Todoroki once again so he could eat the remaining sandwich. "There's plenty of ferries. You won't stay stuck in Chiba even if we don't-Mmngh!?"

The corner of the triangular sandwich was suddenly shoved in Bakugou's mouth, nearly choking him when his teeth reflexively bit down on the bread and caused the creamy filling full of chunks of blueberries to dribble down everywhere, his throat included.

"Ack! Cough! Haa…" gasped Bakugou, hurriedly pulling the sandwich out of his mouth. He coughed a couple of times to free his windpipe from any residual bits of cream cheese and blueberries while he wiped his smeared lips and chin with the back of his free hand. Eyes slightly tear-stained, Bakugou angrily roared at Todoroki. "Don't try to shove that fucking thing down my throat all of a sudden like that! You nearly choked me to death, you asshole!!"

"Bakugou, this isn't the time or place to copy porn scenes," admonished Todoroki, using one of the napkins in the plastic bag to wipe the dribbled filling off of Bakugou. With a dead serious expression on his face, he added, "We have a ferry to catch. Focus on this now, we can try that some other time."

"You- I wasn't- It was-" babbled Bakugou, his face exploding in a myriad of shades of red.

It wasn't enough to get him sweating, but that sure had warmed him up, inside and outside. Nothing like a good, hard blush to fight off the cold during one more date-like day.

Chapter 60

“Shit, it’s cold as heck out here…” cursed Bakugou, his teeth clattering around due to the icy wind permeating his clothes and flesh down to his bones. Note to self, never ride a boat - even if just a regular speed ferry - with light fall clothes, Bakugou grumbled inwardly as his body felt a shiver go down his spine.

“Then let’s go back inside,” said Todoroki with a roll of his eyes. He could keep himself warm through his Quirk just fine even if he didn’t have a lot of layers of clothes on him but Bakugou was a different story. Yet he was still as stubborn as usual…

“No way! What’s the fun of being cloistered in there?” scoffed Bakugou, readily turning his face the other way. He stuffed his hands inside of his jacket’s pockets and continued walking around the ferry’s deck area. “Inside it’s like a waiting area of an airport, filled with tables, seats and random stores. Outside is where you get to see the good stuff.”

“Or get a cold,” deadpanned Todoroki, leisurely looking around the oceanic scenery when Bakugou threw him a dirty look.

“I don’t get colds! I’m as fit as a fiddle!” growled Bakugou, angrily stomping away across the deck to reach the forward area of the ferry. Once he got to the railing around the deck, he crossed his arms over it while muttering a soft ‘ow’. As fit as a fiddle but still liable to sore hips and lower back.

“Didn’t you say you’d be giving my left side good use while outside?” asked Todoroki, stopping right behind Bakugou. Hands placed on the railing on either side of his body, he rested his chin on top of Bakugou’s shoulder and pressed his chest tight on his back. “Better?”

“Just a tiny bit,” scoffed Bakugou, unconsciously leaning his body slightly more on his right to monopolise that warmth - as he should be since all of it belonged to him already. He silently gazed at the sea and the far-away land that slowly shaped itself more and more into recognisable buildings and landmarks as the ferry grew closer to Kanagawa’s port. What awaited them upon arriving at U.A. High School was an endless barrage of questions and comments so if Bakugou could make the 40 minutes ferry trip longer, he’d gladly do it. Perhaps also because it was quite comfortable to be like this with Todoroki but no, it was definitely because he couldn’t stand his annoying friends.

I’d really like it if he could extend his sweet moments to regular school days too rather than keep them all for our dates only, inwardly sighed Todoroki, a small smile on his lips as he observed the relaxed expression on Bakugou’s face. No creasing frown on his brows, no smug smirk - just the same serene demeanour he got whenever deep asleep on top of half of Todoroki’s body. But, in a matter of hours, it would change back to his usual snarky, cranky façade. Quite heart-breaking and infuriating, if Todoroki was to be honest. With those thoughts in mind, Todoroki ended up tilting his head slightly more on top of Bakugou’s shoulder and gave an uninhibited chomp to his tasty-looking neck.

“Ouch…!” yelped Bakugou, promptly slapping his hand on the bitten area of. He turned his body slightly around, a flabbergasted expression on his face as he gawked at Todoroki. “What’s with you now!?”

“Just thought I’d snack a little bit on a cute koala before it goes back to being a ferocious beast,” deadpanned Todoroki. The moment he said that out loud, however, he immediately remembered something koala-themed that he could, in fact, truly snack on. He softly nodded his head as he removed one of his hands from the railing and motioned it to his bag. “Yeah, I really should snack on some cute koalas.”

“Huh…?” interjected Bakugou, cheeks flushed red, mouth gaping wide open as he stared at Todoroki going through his bag’s insides. He

could feel the thundering beating of his heart against his ribcage, as well as hear the maddening sound of it ringing on his eardrums.

“Do you want to eat the cookies now too?” asked Todoroki, gesturing towards Bakugou a well-known brand of koala-shaped cookies, filled with strawberry sweetness inside.

“...!!” Bakugou’s face immediately transformed into that of a raging demon, his brows featuring several creases that skewed his eyebrows and red eyes fuming with anger. He yanked the package out of Todoroki’s hand, threw it on the deck and furiously stomped on it.

“My koala cookies…” gasped Todoroki, his heart breaking in two the moment he heard the loud crunch of countless bite-sized cookies being shattered into a million bits.

“You’re a billion years too early for this stupid bullshit, especially right in front of my eyes!” hissed Bakugou, twisting and turning his foot on top of the flattened package. “I ain’t gonna get replaced by some dumb cookies!”

That said, Bakugou grabbed the collar of Todoroki’s upper clothes and pulled him closer. His lips greedily bit down on Todoroki’s, impatiently waiting for the moment he parted them so his tongue could feast on its insides and saliva too. He pulled Todoroki even closer to his embrace until his back was painfully pressed against the deck’s railing and their chests glued together. As he finally parted their lips after one hell of a kiss, Bakugou suckled and gently scratched his teeth on Todoroki’s tongue, moist lips panting their shared heat against the cold sea air.

“Haa… Better?” smugly asked Bakugou, slowly licking the remnants of their kiss from his lips.

“I don’t know... Do it again and I might be able to give you an answer,” said Todoroki, still trying to level his panting breathing rhythm and accelerated heartbeat.

“You wanted a snack, why are you asking for a full course meal now?” mischievously purred Bakugu, the smirk on his flushed features growing more and more. When Todoroki released a small groan and dropped his head against his shoulder once again, he softly snickered while wrapping his arms around his lover’s body. “Heh… You’re a lot warmer now.”

“I wonder why,” deadpanned Todoroki with a tinge of sarcasm. A hand gently touched the scarred side of his face, prompting him into lifting his head from his shoulder. Sure enough, there it was Bakugou’s smirking features, a mischievous twinkle in his red eyes as he lulled Todoroki into another kiss like a seductive mermaid would have to unsuspecting sailors.

“It definitely wasn’t the cheap imitations,” whispered Bakugou against Todoroki’s lips. A kiss and a small teasing lick later, Bakugou was turning his back on Todoroki once again so he could continue enjoying the view while in the comforts of his embrace. “Stay well behaved for a while longer and the next one might be strawberry flavoured. Well, if I feel like it.”

“And by well behaved, you mean…?” asked Todoroki, an eyebrow arched in puzzlement as he peered down on Bakugou’s satisfied countenance.

“Stop trying to make out in public, we’re in a freaking ferry, for fuck’s sake!” said Bakugou, his words harsh but voice as sweet as honey.

“Alright, I’ll stay well behaved until we get back to the dorm,” acknowledged Todoroki with a masked roll of his eyes.

Bakugou had been the one kissing and seducing him in the middle of the ferry’s deck but telling that to him would be counterproductive for the two of them. Todoroki didn’t mind shouldering the blame if it meant later harvesting all of the rewards. After all, it was just Bakugou being Bakugou and he very much enjoyed that side of him too.

“Haa… You still owe me a new package of koala cookies, though,” sighed Todoroki as he nestled his chest and chin against Bakugou once again, his eyes looking at the same direction he was. “They might come in handy in keeping me well behaved in the long run.”

“Like hell I do! I’d rather have you trying to get in my pants 24/7!” hissed Bakugou, stabbing his elbow right underneath Todoroki’s ribcage and grinding it there for a couple of seconds.

“Are you actually jealous of a few koala-shaped cookies?” asked Todoroki with a certain amusement, more as a teasing remark than a serious question.

“So what if I am…?” grumbled Bakugou under his breath, the tips of his ears turning bright pink. His whole face and the back of his neck also got a reddish tonality to them as he curled his body up slightly and lowered his bashful gaze to the water’s surface.

Todoroki felt an arrow shot right through his heart at a dizzying speed. Childish as it had been, that ‘so what if I am’ had made him fall head over heels in love with Bakugou all over again.

Bakugou loved him to the point of contesting against some cheap

cookies that could be bought from convenience stores or 100-yen shops - how could Todoroki not love him back just as much?

Chapter 61

“And the two lovebirds are finally back~” noted Ashido with a singsong voice when the front door to Heights Alliance opened to reveal two of her classmates. She put down the magazine she had been reading and turned around on the sofa, prompting her arms and upper body over the backrest. “How was the honeymoon?”

“Way too short,” scoffed Bakugou, too busy taking his shoes off to flip the bird at Ashido.

“Well I’ll be damned, Bakugou just admitted he enjoyed doing something,” whistled Jirou, genuinely surprised at hearing such an honest confession coming out of Bakugou’s mouth, even if done in his usual moody and sarcastic way.

“A little bit of love can melt the hardest and coldest of rocks, it seems,” pointed out Asui, her head slightly tilted as she observed Bakugou and Todoroki walking closer to the living room area. “Good for you, Bakugou-chan.”

“Did you also have a good time, Todoroki-kun?” inquired Uraraka, happily grinning at her friend as she also leaned over the backrest of the sofa for better visibility and easier communication.

“Yeah, it was fun,” acknowledged Todoroki with a small nod of his head. The corners of his lips were slightly curled up in a smile. Not for long, as Bakugou’s backpack was suddenly shoved against his chest like a wrecking ball. “Ugh…!”

“Hold that,” instructed Bakugou, immediately dashing up the stairs without waiting a single second for Todoroki’s reply.

“What’s with him all of a sudden?” said Ashido, an eyebrow slightly arched as she followed Bakugou’s retreating back with her eyes. As soon as he fully disappeared from sight, she shrugged her shoulders and turned her attention back to Todoroki. “Anyways~ Give us details! What did you do in Chiba?”

“We climbed a mountain, visited the rock formation up there, came back down through the ropeway, stayed at the hot springs and then returned to Tokyo by ferry this morning,” quickly summarised Todoroki, removing any intimate details of their date that Bakugou would certain berate him for later if he revealed them out loud in front of their classmates. He took a seat in one of the smaller sofas as he waited for Bakugou’s return.

“How nice~ I also want to go on hot spring dates~” dreamily sighed Ashido, her body melting down against the sofa’s backrest as she adjusted her sitting position. “Just think about it. Relaxing in the hot springs with a cup of warm sake floating in the steaming water. Getting all lovey-dovey in the room while dressed in yukatas. And then a relaxing night together, as a couple, far away from ordinary life. Is there anything more perfect than that?”

“We’re still minors, we didn’t drink any alcohol,” pointed out Todoroki, head tilted as he closely listened to Ashido’s daydreams.

“But you don’t deny the rest, huh…” grudgingly grumbled Mineta, biting on his thumb as he venomously peered at Todoroki while half-hidden behind another sofa. “All couples should drop dead already… Especially the ones that are constantly rubbing their hot, steamy relationship right on our fa-”

“Be quiet, Mineta-chan,” said Tsuyu with a strong slap of her frog-like tongue straight to Mineta’s face, despite his withdrawn position. “Stop being a douche and be happy for your classmates’ happiness.”

“Did you take any photos of the places you visited?” asked Uraraka, all excited to hear - or perhaps see - more details about their trip. “I’m really curious about the ferry! How long did it take from one side of the Tokyo Bay to the other?”

“I took some but I promised Bakugou I wouldn’t show them to any of you,” deadpanned Todoroki, his gaze tightening slightly in suspicion. Uraraka’s flustered ‘right, sorry about that’ dispelled the previous bad blood instantly. “We had to take the train to Chiba’s port from where we stayed but overall, the ferry was around 40 minutes. It was a… really fun ferry travel.”

“Kyaaah! Look at that face!” squealed Hagakure, her seemingly empty, floating clothes wiggling left and right on top of the sofa. “Still with your head up in the clouds, are we now, Todoroki? I’m soooo jealous~ Girls, we have to organise a girls trip somewhere in the near future! Even without boyfriends, let’s enjoy our youth to the max!!”

“I like the sound of that!!” cheered Ashido, excitedly raising her arms high in the air. “And let’s make sure we plan things really well, so we don’t end up like those slobs over there.”

Todoroki followed with his gaze the direction where Ashido was gesturing at. A thick cloud of depressing miasma hovered over one of the dining tables, four of its seats occupied by the same gang that had been utterly wrecked the previous day. Todoroki mumbled, “I didn’t even notice them over there... We’re back already, Midoriya, Kirishima, Kaminari, Sero.”

“Yeah, we noticed…” mumbled Midoriya, his head lifelessly dropped over the table. He attempted to lift one of his hands to offer a greeting to his friend but he didn’t have any strength or will left to move. “Welcome back…”

“Good to know your date was a success this time around…” sighed Kirishima, sluggishly bumping his forehead against the table with a very slow, nearly non-existent tempo. “As expected of you two, ahahaha…”

“Thanks. I guess,” said Todoroki, not entirely sure how he should interact with those four classmates of his right now. Though it might have been indirectly, he still played an active role in their annihilation.

“Geez, what a disgusting sight you four are to the eyes,” spewed Bakugou, approaching the sofa area from the elevator. Since he was back to the communal area of the dorm and there were plenty of his classmates around - especially those four -, he took a seat next to Todoroki and pulled his backpack from his lap. He opened the zipper and started searching around through its insides. “Come here, all of you. I’ve got something really nice to give you. Hehe…”

We might have some funerals today, inwardly deadpanned Todoroki, his eyes stuck on the glee once again hidden within his lover’s devilish eyes. He knew what ‘card’ Bakugou was about to use against their friends and he knew it could very well permanently slay some of them if his move was perfectly executed.

“Souvenirs!? Did you buy souvenirs for us!?” yelped Kaminari, immediately jumping out of his seat and dashing towards the sofas at the speed of light. Albeit not being as overexcited as Kaminari, his other three gloomy companions also came closer.

“Pigs must be about to learn to fly if Bakugou bought something seemingly similar to a souvenir…” mumbled Jirou in disbelief. She nevertheless leaned slightly forward as she patiently waited for the big reveal.

“I don’t need these anymore so you can have them back,” leisurely said Bakugou as he threw two objects to the table in the middle of the sofas. He smugly snorted, “Heh, not that you’re gonna need them much now either.”

“Ah…” gasped Midoriya and Sero at the same time, immediately recognising the objects being put on display. Their faces turned ghastly pale as they screeched, “MY TICKET!!!!/MY WALLET!!!!”

“How could you do this to us, Kacchan!?” sobbed Midoriya, holding the folded ticket against his chest for dear life. It was now a useless piece of paper, as it couldn’t be used on other screenings or refunded, but it was still a precious All Might-memento.

“You’re pure evil! A demon!” spat Sero, his body dropping tiredly on a free space in the sofa. He took his hands to his head, both mind and heart completely floored by that discovery. “Why would you sabotage our trip to Chiba like this, you heartless monster!?”

“Sabotage…?” repeated Kirishima, he and Kaminari still looking a bit lost when it came to what was going on. Soon, however, as Midoriya’s and Sero’s despairing cries and sobs echoed through the communal area, it started dawning on him what had happened. “Oh, crap… Our breakfast… and then the failed burger challenge…”

“This was revenge on level one,” started Bakugou, an evil smirk curling up the corner of his lips as he majestically leaned his back on the sofa and put his feet on top of the centre table. “If any of you, no matter who, no matter how, pulls any more of that crap, be it taking photos without permission, be it spying on me and Todoroki, be it any other annoying shit, you can bet your fuckin’ ass I’ll raise it to level hundred right away! I won’t be as nice as I was this time. You might come out of it with permanent, lifelong damages. ARE WE CLEAR, YOU FUCKIN’ MORONS!?”

“Y-YES, SIR…!!!!” cried out the students in unison, some of them actually saluting at the instructions (aka threats) coming from their demon of a ‘general’.

“B-But it was your fault… It’s you guys who have been flaunting your relationship right in front of our eyes…” mumbled Mineta, all curled up behind the sofa, his hands protectively covering his head as if he was expecting a missile to drop on him. “We’re all a bunch of teenagers, of course we’re gonna get curious about it. So it’s all your fault… If you hadn’t been screwing around behind our backs or going out on dates to screw some more or flirting all the time or being all lovey-dovey at the dorm or-”

“I think you haven’t been doing a good job cleaning your disgusting ears, you sexual predator wannabe, so it’s time to make an example out of you,” hissed Bakugou, grabbing Mineta by the back of his clothes and pulling him out of his hiding spot. All everyone could see was a beast wearing the skin of a human being as he dragged Mineta all the way to the table, his body as stiff as a board out of fear. Bakugou released Mineta right on top of the table and crossed his arms over his chest, his red gaze tightening a little bit more as he looked down on him. He then sneered, “If you’re that curious about how other people fuck, why don’t you go ask your own damn parents about it? They might still remember the position they were using on the catastrophic day your daddy dearest decided to shoot it all inside of your mommy dearest. Don’t forget to tell us all which one it was afterwards, so we can ban it under the death penalty.”

“.....!!”

Flabbergasted, and slightly nauseated, as they had all been, class 1-A could still register the moment Mineta’s soul left his body and he descended into a terrifying mental trip down the sickest fantasies a degenerate like him could have towards his birth parents.

Mineta never again approached either Bakugou or Todoroki about their relationship. Just the mention of it made his little body shake like a cluster of grapes on a vine trying to survive a thunderstorm.

"Hmph!" With that whole matter now settled, Bakugou went back to the sofa, sitting once again next to Todoroki. He turned his head in his direction while pointing with his thumb at the crowd staring at him in shock. "See? That's how you do it. Memorised the whole process, just in case you need to use it while I'm not around?"

"I think I'm good," deadpanned Todoroki, as expressionless as a blank piece of paper while glancing at their pitiful classmates. Bakugou truly was a genius at terrifying others, even if he didn't intend to follow through with his threats.

I… I wanna move back home… They can have the dorm all to themselves… , inwardly whimpered class 1-A, every single one of them fearful about the future in their own way. Some dreaded unintentionally angering either of the two once again, others feared that some could unintentionally anger either of the two once again - either way it went, they were all aware that something would happen once again that would make the duo flip out on them. And they had all come to know how terrifying this couple could be when rubbed the wrong way, be it as a witness, be it on their own flesh.

"What do you wanna do about dinner?" asked Bakugou, already riding another wave as he went through his cell phone. "Should we just eat Lunch Rush's stuff for a change?"

"That's fine by me," acknowledged Todoroki with a small nod, lazing about on the sofa likewise.

They change gears way too fast. It's honestly bad for my heart!, inwardly stammered Midoriya, safely stuffing his ticket in his pants' pocket just

in case Bakugou changed his mind and decided to shred it right in front of his eyes. He was already feeling extremely miserable over having missed the All Might-themed screening, he wouldn't be able to take it if he lost the only memorabilia he got out of it. That's why he reflexively shrieked when he heard Bakugou loudly clicking his tongue in annoyance.

"Did something happen?" inquired Todoroki, also curious about the sudden reversal in Bakugou's mood.

"...Be back in a few…" grumbled Bakugou under his breath, one of his eyebrows visibly twitching in annoyance. He got up from the sofa as he released a low groan and walked out of the front door, which he closed with his characteristic door slams.

Todoroki kept staring at the door, still wondering what was going on. Bakugou had rushed up the stairs earlier, now he had rushed out of the dorm. That wasn't his typical behaviour at all. An explanation to the latter one, at least, came in the shape of a loud roar, perfectly audible even from inside of the dorm.

"You think I'm your goddamned express delivery service!?" roared Bakugou's voice from the other side of the front door. *"Quit it with the nagging already! ...Fine! I said fine, for fuck's sake! But I'm not going to be the one doing it!"*

Ten seconds later, the front door was kicked open and an extremely furious Bakugou stepped inside a second time. He made a direct beeline to the sofa, took a hold of his backpack and grabbed Midoriya by the front of his clothes to drag him outside.

"EH!? K-Kacchan!? W-What are you…!?" yelped Midoriya in a panic, his arms waggling in the air as he used his legs to resist the sudden kidnapping - and possible subsequent execution. "Like, please,

seriously, don't kill me! I-I'll apologise for all of the photos and the stalking and whatever more problems you have with me…!"

"Or you shut up on your own or I'll shut you up with my fist," warned Bakugou, giving Midoriya one final yank to shove him towards his oversized red boots by the entrance area. "Pick one!"

"I will after you explain to me what's going on!" squeaked Midoriya, nevertheless putting his shoes on as fast as his trembling and fumbling fingers allowed him.

"Haaa… We're going to my place…" groaned Bakugou in utter exasperation, poking his foot on Midoriya's upper arm several times to rush him. "The old hag forgot to give some important shit to Inko before she and the other scatterbrained moron left for a business trip. Now I have to fix their fucking mistakes…"

"Oh, so that's what's going on," sighed Midoriya in relief, his hands returning to their usual operational movements now that the guillotine hovering an inch away from his neck had been lifted and set aside. "I thought you were planning to take me to the middle of the woods and bury me alive there or something…"

"I know plenty of shortcuts that will let me do just that so don't try me, Shitty Nerd!!" hissed Bakugou, giving one final kick on Midoriya's arm that made him topple down sideways against the wall.

"Can I go too?" asked Todoroki, suddenly getting up from the sofa as if someone had lightened his butt on fire. Amidst his expressionless demeanour, his mismatched eyes shone in excitement and expectation. He asked again, now that both Bakugou and Midoriya were looking in his direction. "Can I go too?"

“Hah?” “What?”

Chapter 62

“Fuckin’ hell, I’m surrounded by a fuckton of idiots!” grumbled Bakugou under his breath, a terrifying frown on his face as he leisurely walked on the street. “What do they think I am, a freakin’ circus attraction!? I don’t get them! I seriously don’t get idiots and their idiotic brains!!”

“You somehow managed to deal with the situation so just… haa… ignore them,” sighed Todoroki, inwardly shaking his head in disapproval. The moment Todoroki voiced out his intentions of also going to Bakugou’s house, there was a collective chorus of ‘I wanna go too!’ in the dorm. It goes without saying that Bakugou completely flipped at them for it.

“What pisses me off still pisses me off, no matter how much I try to blank it out of my damned brain!!” roared Bakugou, furiously stomping his feet on the ground as he accelerated his walking pace slightly more. “Besides, this is all your fault in the first place! Why the heck do you even want to go to my house!?”

“I’m curious about the house where you grew up,” promptly explained Todoroki with a small tilt of his head. He innocently inquired, “Should I not be?”

“I-It’s just a house, like every other you have seen or visited before...” sourly grumbled Bakugou - though it was undeniable the pinkish blush that now plagued his cheekbones. “What’s there to be curious about…?”

“Yes but it’s still *your* house so that makes it special compared to all the houses I’ve seen or visited before,” pointed out Todoroki, softly chuckling to himself at yet another display of Bakugou’s contradictory behaviour. Bakugou was vehemently denying Todoroki’s interest in

his personal life yet he sure looked happy and satisfied about it. “Not to mention, you were running around all over the dorm as soon as we got back and that got me wondering. Did you also rush upstairs because of your mother’s request?”

“Nah, I only went to my room because I wanted to check on those… two…” started Bakugou in a quite leisure tone but as soon as his brain fully proceeded what he was blurting out, the soft shade of pink on his cheekbones turned into scarlet. Where was a hole or a pit when someone so desperately needed one? He cursed, “Fuck…”

“I see,” deadpanned Todoroki, his intense blank gaze stuck right on Bakugou’s face. Of course he had gone to check the safety of the gifted koala plush toy and bonsai tree. Bakugou might complain about them whenever they were within sight but Todoroki knew he loved them to bits from the moment he first saw them paired up together. “I’m sure they also had a great time all alone in your room.”

“Stop it. Don’t say such disgusting things about that dumb koala plushie and its tree…” groaned Bakugou, his body visibly shuddering at the thought alone. To take a breather on that embarrassing topic, Bakugou suddenly came to a stop and turned around on his heels so he could more easily yell, “And speaking of disgusting, will you hurry the heck up!? Unlike a dweeb like you, my time is precious! Get moving already, Shitty Deku!”

“S-Sorry!” yelped Midoriya, immediately dashing from the end of the street until nearby his two classmates. As he did so, he inwardly vented his frustrations and sorrows. *Why me? Couldn’t Kacchan go on his own or with just Todoroki-kun? Why do I have to go too…? Why do I have to put my neck out in the line because of them all the time?*

“Even if he doesn’t walk there with us, he knows where your house is,” pointed out Todoroki, expressionlessly staring at Midoriya as he shortened the distance between them. “Right, Midoriya?”

“Y-Yeah…” hesitantly acknowledged Midoriya, gulping down hard in dry right afterwards. He truly couldn’t tell if Todoroki was stating the obvious to appease Bakugou or if he was coldly censuring Midoriya for all of his previous stalking misadventures. Probably a mixture of both.

“Whatever. I just want to do this stupid shit fast and go back to the dorm,” said Bakugou with a certain annoyance, once again resuming with their way to his parents’ house.

A few minutes later, they were arriving at the Bakugou residence.

"Excuse me for my intrusion…" meekly sighed Midoriya, all too familiar with that house to be surprised by its size and modern configuration, especially when compared to the neighbouring constructions.

"You said your parents are away for work, right?" inquired Todoroki, glancing around his surroundings as he took off his shoes at the entrance area. "What's their job?"

"My old man is a fashion designer," explained Bakugou, leisurely stepping inside of his house to guide everyone to the correct division. His mother had said she left everything that needed to be delivered on top of the living room’s table so that’s where they all went. “The old hag dabbles in the same industry, in a way.”

“That’s unexpected,” confessed Todoroki, an eyebrow slightly arched as he followed right after Bakugou, Midoriya once again lagging behind them. “Since you’re so fixated on being a pro hero, I always thought your parents must have been working in that field. Kinda surprising to hear they’re in the fashion industry.”

“Yeah, as if I’d ever become a carbon copy of my folks, whichever industry they work for,” snorted Bakugou with a roll of his eyes.

“I think you and Mitsuki-san are quite similar, Kacchan. Both physically and personality-wise,” noted Midoriya, already readying himself to take a seat as far away from his childhood friend as possible. If only he could have done so before opening his mouth. Bakugou grabbed him by the collar of his shirt and yanked him closer to the table. He couldn’t help the squeak that exited his throat. “Hiiiiek!”

“Get your hands moving, not your fuckin’ pie hole!” hissed Bakugou, finishing his verbal assault with a physical kick to Midoriya’s shin. He then turned around to Todoroki, who was rooted in place only blankly staring at the two of them arguing as usual. “Take a seat wherever. Deku’s the one delivering that shit, he’s the one searching for it too.”

“Okay,” shortly acknowledged Todoroki, doing as told and taking a seat at a nearby sofa. Bakugou was already on edge as it was, he’d be better off keeping himself in his little corner and let the homeowner deal with the rest of the situation. *Well, it’s not much but at least I get to observe the living room to my heart’s contents.*

“The old hag said it was on top of the table but there’s a fuckton of crap here!” roared Bakugou, a frown on his face as he closely glared at the mess of documents, magazines and other papers spread all over the mentioned table. He yanked some of them out of the table and started going through them one by one. “Did those two leave in a rush or something…?”

“Kacchan, um... what am I even supposed to be looking for?” cautiously inquired Midoriya, also picking up a handful of documents to do something, anything at all, to avoid being admonished even further by Bakugou. All he knew of this whole situation was that there

was something Bakugou's mother wanted to deliver to his mother - apart from that, he was completely in the dark.

"She said it was an interior magazine, two catalogues and some sort of sketches or planifications or whatever shit it's called," grumbled Bakugou, far too busy going through the messy table and neatly organising it in different piles to give Midoriya and his annoying questions too much attention. "Ah… This should be the magazine."

"Why would Mitsuki-san want to give this to my mom?" mumbled Midoriya, also spotting what was probably one of the catalogues and setting it aside on top of the sofa. "Is she thinking about renovating our apartment? I didn't hear anything about that…"

"Now that she finally got rid of you, Inko must have enough time on her hands to play around with her apartment to her heart's contents," scoffed Bakugou, a knowing evil smirk slowly curling up the corner of his lips. "I hope she also attacks your room and throws away the rest of your All Might collection. And whatever else you're keeping there illegally."

"You're making it sound like I've been trafficking some sort of nefarious substance or drugs, Kacchan…" sighed Midoriya with a roll of his eyes. He was inwardly sweating and shaking, however, for he probably did have certain 'illegal' things stored in his bedroom. The kind of stuff that would make Bakugou want to slaughter him after publicly shaming him for it, at the very least.

"You know very well what I'm talking about!" growled Bakugou, causing Midoriya to himself retreat a couple of inches further away from him and hastened his searching motions. He released a small sigh and continued with his side of the table. "So what if Inko found a new way to keep herself entertained? Better to wreck her whole apartment to renovate it than to wreck her brains out wondering when's the next time her idiot of a son will break something. Quit your annoying muttering and hurry up taking her this shit!"

"....." Midoriya slowly halted and looked up at Bakugou with a certain hesitation. Had Bakugou dragged him all the way to his house to deliver something he could have very easily on his own… just so Midoriya would have an actual reason to spend some more time with his worrywart mother? No way. No way… right? Midoriya turned the turbo on and continued going through his half of the table as fast as he could to search for the final items in his delivery list. "Oh! Found it! I found the other catalogue, Kacchan! Only the sketches left!"

"Shut up! Can't you fuckin' pipe it down!?" roared Bakugou, his booming voice making much more noise than Midoriya's eager yells. He picked up one of the piles he had been making and slapped it on top of the table. "The sketches! Heck if I know which ones Inko needs!"

"Oh…" groaned Midoriya, his shoulders drooping slightly in disappointment. That sure was a thick pile of papers. So thick it was hard to believe they had been messily spread all over a single table.

So they can actually get along at times, inwardly noted Todoroki, his face completely expressionless as he observed the back-and-forth quarrel. They did know each other since they were very small children so even if Midoriya was perpetually scared out of his wits about Bakugou or if Bakugou made questions to torment Midoriya multiple times a day, it went without saying that there must have been some sort of mutual understanding between them keeping the relationship going. *I always feel jealous whenever Midoriya flaunts his long-time acquaintance with Bakugou but… weirdly enough, seeing them like this doesn't bother me at all now. I wonder why?*

"Tsk! I'll just call the old hag and ask her directly…" grumbled Bakugou under his breath after an annoyed click of his tongue. He slipped his cell phone out of his pocket and leaned it on his ear after quickly dialling a number. "Hey, old hag! Where the heck are the sketches or whatever crap they are called!? ...I know they're on the table! There's a shitton of them on the table! Which ones are Inko's?

...As if I understand any of that lingo! You two always make a safety copy by scanning those papers, right? Just send me a fuckin' copy of them so I can use them as a guide! ...Shut up, I don't wanna hear that from someone who leaves the whole house upside down before rushing out!"

I think Midoriya was right when he said Bakugou is similar to his mother, inwardly deadpanned Todoroki, his mismatched eyes following Bakugou around as he walked back and forth in the living room. Even with the distance, he could still hear a loud female voice coming from the cell phone. It was a world away from his soft-spoken mother.

"Freaking finally," grumbled Bakugou once his cell phone briefly beeped after the end of his phone call. He was fiddling with the electronic device to get all of the sent images in the same place while walking back to the table when it happened. "Right, so I finally can tell which are… the… corre…"

"Kacchan?" called Midoriya, an eyebrow slightly arched as he stared at the flabbergasted expression on Bakugou's face.

"This… You… When… To-… TODOROKI!!!" Bakugou started with a stutter but his rage quickly peaked into a full-blown scream. Was it 'rage' that was written? It was actually meant to be 'embarrassment'. Bakugou's entire face exploded into a beet red blush as he dashed towards the sofa Todoroki was sitting at while tightly clenching his hand around his cell phone. Once he reached his lover, he grabbed him by the front of his clothes and shoved the cell phone's screen right on his face. "What's the meaning of this!? What the fuck have you been doing while I'm asleep!? HUH!?"

"Damn it… I was planning to send it to my phone before you noticed it in yours…" sighed Todoroki, completely unfazed by Bakugou's aggressive hold on his clothes.

“You’re not feeling guilty in the least, are you, you opportunistic asshole!?” hissed Bakugou, pulling and yanking Todoroki back and forth with his hand while he promptly deleted that photo with the other. Or at least that was the plan. For some stupid reason, his finger refused to press down on the delete button. His inability to do something that he very much wanted only made Bakugou all the angrier. “ARGH! This is all your fuckin’ fault, Deku!!!!”

“Excuse me!?” yelped Midoriya, his whole body straightening as if he had been hit by lightning. Slowly, very carefully, he crawled away and away and away from the sofa and the raging beast venomously glaring at him. He had no idea of what he had done (or not done) this time, he just knew he was utterly screwed. “I-I don’t know what you’re talking about, K-Kacchan. I haven’t done anything to your phone or while you’re sleeping. Seriously, I didn’t do anything! I swear! So, um, please let’s take it easy and discuss whatever problem you have like civilised people. Okay?”

“My one and only problem is you and the way you corrupt others into secretly taking photos of everything around them!!!” roared Bakugou, angrily stomping his foot on the floor. His hand was still jerking the otherwise motionless Todoroki around. However, for as angry his voice and action might be, it was hard to hide the bright red blush covering the entirety of his face.

“Y-You’re… so… c-cute… Baku...gou,” chuckled Todoroki, his voice coming out all scrambled up out of the intense vibrations to his entire upper body. He chuckled some more, inwardly only this time, when Bakugou turned his raging blushing features back to him and barked a ‘shut up!’

“...yeah, it is kinda cute… he didn’t react like that at all when I was the one secretly taking photos…” softly muttered Midoriya under his breath, his brows scrunching up slightly with his inquiring expression. “...I guess it does depend on who does it or why that someone has done- HIIIIIIEK!!!”

“I’m definitely killing you now,” hissed both Bakugou and Todoroki at the same time, their seething demon-like eyes slowly turning to their prey. Bakugou slowly released Todoroki’s clothes and loudly cracked his fingers, lips curled up into a terrifying smirk. Todoroki still remained sat down on the sofa but his presence in that closed room was sharper than the deadliest of knives.

Midoriya would have fainted out of fright if he hadn’t grown numb to blood-curdling sights like that one already.

“K-Kacchan, s-seriously, I d-didn’t-” stammered Midoriya, fervently shaking his head in denial to everything he was made to be guilty of. Before he could even finish his explanations and excuses, his clothes were grabbed, the sound of paper flapping around stabbed at his overly sensitive ears and his eyes shortly after bumped into a front door. “.....Eh?”

“You’re forever banned from my house, Shitty Nerd!!” yelled Bakugou from the other side of the closed door. “Be sure to shove the extra sketches in my mailbox once you’re done with Inko!”

“Ehhhh…?” gasped Midoriya, his mouth gaping wide-open as he gawked at the front door. The floor around him was a tempestuous mess of pieces of paper, magazines, catalogues and his red shoes.

Midoriya would have expected to get painfully tortured once again by Bakugou and Todoroki, not to get suddenly kicked out from his house. His face immediately turned pale at the sudden realisation.

“K-Kacchan didn’t kill me…? Oh no, Kacchan didn’t kill me!” yelped Midoriya, hands holding the side of his head as he screamed his lungs out into the sky. He was doomed to live the next couple of years at the dorm in perpetual fear of when Bakugou would enact his level 100 revenge…

There were things scarier than death… and Bakugou Katsuki's vengeful schemes were one of them.

Chapter 63

“Seriously, I’m surrounded by nothing but idiots… I wish they’d hurry up and make stupidity punishable by law already… They’d be striking gold with lawsuits and fines…” grumbled Bakugou, his feet loudly stomping on the floor as he walked back to the living room. He came to a halt, an eyebrow slightly arched on his brows, when he noticed that fixed gaze preying on him. “What? I ain’t gonna turn my damned house into a murder scene! Deku can go and die somewhere else for all I care!”

“So you say but you always come to his rescue when we’re about to really flip on him,” pointed out Todoroki, his expressionless demeanour peeking from behind the sofa’s backrest so he could stare blankly at Bakugou. “Do you know how many times you’ve stopped me from feeling even more jealous of him by now?”

“Huh? Like hell I am!!” growled Bakugou, accusingly pointing his finger at Todoroki while he walked closer to the sofa. He heavily dropped his body there, only a small corridor of air separating him from his lover. “Never would I protect Deku in any form or shape! The day he fuckin’ kicks the bucket is the day I throw my very first party! But if he wants to die, then he should do it on his own, far away from us so he doesn’t find a way to drag me or you or whatever else belongs to me down with him! Hmph! You’re supposed to be smart, how the heck can’t you even understand that!?”

“Right,” deadpanned Todoroki, still staring at Bakugou in disbelief.

For all of his violent, aggressive bark, Bakugou sure bit less than expected. Perhaps it really was like Todoroki had previously concluded - despite all of the obstructive downsides of their relationship, Bakugou and Midoriya had long reached a mutual consensus between them. It was more than obvious that Midoriya liked Bakugou, maybe a bit too much to be called pure, unadulterated admiration. But it turned out that Bakugou also liked Midoriya in his

own way, deep, deep down. Toleration would also be a good way to describe it if it had been someone else doing it but Bakugou didn't have the saintly patience for that kind of flimsiness - he was an all or nothing type of man. Hence, there must have been some sort of reciprocity to Midoriya's friendly intentions since the very beginning.

"Huh? This is weird…" blurted out Todoroki without any warning. His face lightly scrunched up into an inquisitive expression as he quickly reviewed his thoughts and assumptions. "Bakugou, I think I no longer mind it if you like Midoriya."

".....What the fuck is wrong with you all of a sudden?" croaked Bakugou, his face turning slightly pale in disgust. He even felt a cold shudder running down his spine as that cursed comment wormed itself into his ears and stabbed at his brain. Just to be safe, Bakugou motioned his hand forward and slapped it on top of Todoroki's forehead. "You don't seem to have a fever so I suppose you must have banged your head pretty badly somewhere while I wasn't looking!"

"I didn't hit my head anywhere and I'm more than healthy," deadpanned Todoroki after a small sigh. He removed Bakugou's hand from his forehead and scooched closer to him, a tiny, tiny smile shadowing his lips. "I now know you love me to the point of feeling jealous of some cheap cookies so I think you liking other people as friends stopped bothering me as much. The power of your love is amazing, Bakugou. I thought I'd be feeling jealous of every single person that was around you for the rest of my life. But the moment I realised I was your number 1, those feelings just went away. It still annoys me whenever they act too familiar with you but even so, it's amazing, Bakugou. Your love is like a healing magic spe- Ugh!"

"It's always the same damn thing with you…" grumbled Bakugou, his vice-like grip strongly clawing on Todoroki's whole face. Steam would erupt from his ears if one more word came from his mouth so Bakugou desperately shut Todoroki up before it was too late for him. "How the hell can you spout all of that bullshit with a straight face like that!? Shut up! Be quiet! And then die! Are your facial muscles fuckin' dead already or something!? Stop looking at me like that!

What do you even think I am!? Who gave you permission to say something like that to me!? Huh? I told you to stop with that, didn't I? What's so fun about being all sappy and shit!? I don't get it! I don't get you!! Shit… Let's just get out of here and go back to the dorm!!"

"Your bashful side really is something else," chuckled Todoroki, lightly tugging at Bakugou's sleeve to urge him to remove his hand from his face. No matter how anyone looked at it, they wouldn't be able to go back to the dorm if Bakugou didn't release him first.

"I told you to shut up, didn't I!?" yelped Bakugou, the pads of his fingers getting even more glued to Todoroki's head. "Or what, you want me to backtrack to yesterday and remind you of the sorry state you were at after passing out in the hot springs!?"

"Go ahead," said Todoroki, suddenly hitting Bakugou's elbow from below with one of his hands so he could free himself from that deadly grip. Once his head was unrestrained, he shortened the distance between him and Bakugou's flabbergasted face. Surely Bakugou wouldn't attempt to do anything with them this close to one another. "You'd just be getting my point across even more, Bakugou. About everything."

"I- Fuckin'- Aaaargh!" screamed Bakugou after giving up on any babbled attempts at proper speech. He strongly slammed his forehead against Todoroki's shoulder, hiding his sizzling face in the process. It was always the same thing, always the same reaction from Bakugou. He really couldn't stand that deadly bluntness of him whenever it was aimed straight at his core. With a small, shaky sigh, Bakugou slowly grabbed at Todoroki's upper clothes, his brain spiralling, swirling far too much to put any breaks on whatever exited his mouth right afterwards. "You're such an insufferable little shit at times. What do you mean, my love cured you of any jealousy towards random people? That's stupid, it makes no sense, it's absolutely ridiculous! Just so you know, I find it hilarious whenever you get jealous over dumb shit. Yet you dare to say that you won't get jealous of those morons anymore while I'm over here getting stupidly jealous of some dumb koala cookies!? Fuck you! You can go shove all of that bullshit in the nearest

trash can! Actually, do it right this moment! Right now! Being the only one getting jealous makes it seem like I'm the only one in love…"

For the second time that day, Bakugou's childish bandy words transformed into an arrow that shot right through Todoroki, deep inside of his chest. How come Bakugou was so quick at admonishing him for being too loving and affectionate with his words but didn't notice at all how passionate his phrasing could be at certain times? Yes, he might not be able to say it with a straight face like Todoroki apparently was but that bashfulness, those smiles only made those words all the more meaningful.

I really can't win against him, inwardly sighed Todoroki, his body slumping down backwards on the sofa under the weight of Bakugou's body and the words that got him swooning on the edge to paradise. *No, when it comes to this, I don't even want to win. I'll greedily take all of his love and match it up with mine.*

"N-Not to mention, you're just fuckin' Todoroki!" continued Bakugou, seemingly still too dazed by that previous 'attack' to shut himself up even after both of them tumbled down on the sofa. "What gives you the right to get rid of jealousy before I do? I won't accept that! As if I'd lose to you! You're nothing but a stupid tree, behave like one! Don't speak, don't move, don't do anything! It's the damned koala that chooses the tree, not the other way around! So don't start getting too ahead of yourself, you opportunistic asshole! You ain't getting more out of me unless I want to give it to you! And if I did give you anything, it was out of concern for myself only, not for you. So deep down, I'm not actually giving you anything at all, you're the one who's giving to me and me alone! It's all me, all mine! Nothing you!"

Oh no… I think I just short-circuited Bakugou's heart , inwardly deadpanned Todoroki as he lifted the back of his head from the sofa to be able to peek at Bakugou's hidden face. With their current position, it went without saying that Todoroki couldn't see much of it but he could feel the heat irradiating on his shoulder and chest.

“Yeah, it’s all for you,” acknowledged Todoroki with a small chuckle. He lifted one of his hands from the sofa and gently dropped it on top of Bakugou’s head, his fingers softly, lightly ruffling through his spiky blonde locks. Those affectionate pats seemed to be the right move to calm him down, as Bakugou immediately quietened into deep silence and, after a couple of minutes, started turning his head towards him. Was it 100% effective, though? No, Todoroki’s neck and the sharp teeth sinking down on his skin would say that no, it was not. “Ouch! Wai- That hurts! Owowowow!”

“Don’t go thinking I’ve forgotten about that photo already,” said Bakugou after slowly licking the bruising bite mark on Todoroki’s neck. Only then did he lift his body slightly more from on top of Todoroki, his red eyes still filled with suspicion as he glanced directly at his mismatched eyes.

“Right. That was my bad,” sighed Todoroki, also shifting his laid down position on the sofa to protectively nestle the throbbing bite mark on his neck with his hand. He sighed once again, this time with a much more disheartened tone. “I shouldn’t have taken photos of you without your permission, especially after what you told us that happened between you and Midoriya in the past. So if you want to delete the photo, go right ahead, I guess…”

“I never said anything about deleting the photo, did I?” smugly said Bakugou, turning his face the other way while crossing his arms over his chest. “Just don’t do it again. Like, for real. Never again.”

“I promise I won’t,” acknowledged Todoroki with a small nod of his head. Since they were in the middle of making promises regarding bad, questionable behaviours, he also added, “I also promise to never stalk you like Midoriya did. Or does. Wait, were you even aware of that one, Bakugou?”

“You think I wouldn’t notice that stupid hair of his sticking out from behind trees and electric posts!? I can smell his nerdy stench from a

mile away!" roared Bakugou, his hands clenching into tight, trembling fists. Saying such, however, reminded him of the preceding topic. A smirk nearly spilt into his lips but Bakugou managed to hold himself back and kept on angrily shouting with a frown on his face. "He's an irredeemable stalker! He was supposed to go to a different elementary school but apparently he bawled his eyes out at Inko to be able to go to the same school as me. He used his mother's requests to deliver food to us as a way to crawl his way into my bedroom countless times! Heck, just the thought of living in the same building as me must be scrambling around with his stalker tendencies and make him even more prone to snapping photos while no one's paying attention. I bet his cell phone is filled to the brim with candid shots. He's a step away from becoming a fuckin' voyeur and now I'm gonna break his fuckin' cell phone the next time I see him and why the fuck are you so damn calm!?"

"Yeah, it doesn't do much now," deadpanned Todoroki, his voice as monotone as it could get. The moment Bakugou started bitching left and right about Midoriya, Todoroki knew right away that he was being tested on his claims of no longer feeling jealous about a big majority of things. He didn't even need to fake his reaction, he truly didn't feel the need to be jealous about any of it. Todoroki would still heat up his flames slightly more than usual the next time he sparred against Midoriya during training sessions, though.

"Tsk!" With that click of his tongue, Bakugou's frown got even more moody and sulky. That was it, he wouldn't feel jealous of anything anymore either. No matter how big or how small the event might be, he was banned from feeling that human emotion. Bakugou wouldn't let himself be left behind in the continuous evolution and growth of their relationship, that he wouldn't!

"I have a way to make you feel better about that. But you'll probably yell and get mad at me afterwards so... what do you want me to do, Bakugou?" asked Todoroki, head slightly tilted to the left as he cautiously studied the cranky expression on his face.

"Hmph! I don't need your pity or help! I'll sort it out on my own,

thank you very much," scoffed Bakugou, promptly getting up from the sofa. He jerked his chin towards his house's entrance door. "We've stalled for way too long. It's time to leave, opportunistic asshole."

"Yes, yes," said Todoroki with a roll of his eyes. He obediently did as the homeowner told him to and followed right after him as they exited the house. It was such a waste to leave already, especially with that being Todoroki's first visit to Bakugou's house, but other opportunities - better opportunities - would surely come in the future. "Since we're outside, should we buy our groceries for the week now?"

"I'm feeling very tempted about making those feared spicy soba noodles of yours so are you sure you want me to be in a store where I can stock up on the hottest shit your taste buds could ever experience?" grumbled Bakugou, sideways glancing at Todoroki as he locked the front door with his keys. "You wanna cry that badly, is that it?"

"If we go now, you won't have to go with Kirishima later so I guess it's worth the risk," ended up compromising Todoroki after a good couple of minutes of introspection and weighing the pros and cons. He could still vividly remember the burning sensation on his mouth and throat when he ate a single bite of Bakugou's dinner so he'd probably get more cons than pros with that choice.

"Hah! No more jealousy, my ass! You're still plenty of jealous, you idiot!" snorted Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. How the heck did he forget about Todoroki's famous denseness? He was probably being so blind to his own feelings that he didn't spot the smaller bouts of jealousy that didn't get anything flaming. Somehow, that was a reassuring, soothing thought.

"There's a difference between jealousy and possessiveness, Bakugou," explained Todoroki, softly shaking his head in disapproval to Bakugou's incorrect claims. "Just because I don't get jealous of Kirishima anymore doesn't mean the amount of time you spend with

him, all alone, just the two of you, doesn't bother me."

"...Why don't we also go to the bookstore and buy you a dictionary while we're at it...?" sighed Bakugou in utter exasperation.

Yup, Todoroki really got him there. He totally managed to make Bakugou momentarily drop his guard down and underestimate how stupidly dense he could be.

Bakugou couldn't say he hated any of it, though. At all.

Chapter 64

“Guys!!” shouted Ashido all of a sudden, running as fast as a bullet from the girls’ side of the building to the communal living room area. Her fast motions only came to a stop when she crashed against the side of one of the sofas.

“W-What’s the matter, Ashido!?” yelped Kirishima, immediately adopting a battle stance with his hardened forearms. He glanced around the living room and kitchen area, a suspicious frown on his brows. “Are we under attack? Something wrong on your side of the dorm?”

“No… I just…” started Ashido, taking her sweet time sucking in air into her lungs after the maddening dash all the way downstairs. After a long sigh, she straightened her standing position and showcased 3 DVD cases to all onlookers, a happy grin on her lips. “I totally forgot that I had rented this movie trilogy. So who wants to do a movie night!?”

“Haa… You scared us there, Ashido-san…” groaned Midoriya, his body all but melting with relief against the sofa’s backrest. For some reason, his first thought had been that Bakugou had already started enacting his level hundred revenge ploy and the first signs were surprisingly coming from the opposite side of the dorm building rather than from his close proximity. No one could blame him for having done so, the way he had been scurried away by both Bakugou and Todoroki a few hours prior.

“You should have phrased it differently,” admonished Iida too, releasing a small sigh of relief nevertheless. “Given our background history, I can only expect the worst whenever I see one of us running around the dorm as if the devil running from the cross.”

“Mina-chan, that was mean of you,” reproached Asui with a disapproving shake of her head. Uraraka, who was going through a magazine with her, only awkwardly laughed at the whole accidental scare.

“Sorry, sorry, it wasn’t my intention to scare you or anything,” apologised Ashido, clapping her hands in front of her face while bowing her head just the slightest. “I was in such a rush, since the rental period ends tomorrow, that it just slipped my mind.”

“Sudden scares aside, a movie night sounds awesome!!” yelped Kaminari, his body teetering in excitement at the prospect of that unexpected source of nightly entertainment. “Set the lights down low, get those bombastic speakers from Jirou’s room downstairs, have Satou make some popcorn and other snacks, and we’re set for one hell of a movie night!”

“What are the movies about?” inquired Uraraka, getting more and more into that idea after hearing Kaminari blurt out his own suggestions.

“It’s a super popular American hero movie trilogy, one I’ve been dying to watch for a while now but it’s always been unavailable whenever I went to the rental store,” explained Ashido, giving small jumps in the air out of pure excitement. “I finally managed to grab them a couple of days ago but I completely forgot about them because of the whole school festival rush. Good thing I spotted them in my room on time or I’d be charged one hell of a delay fee!”

“That would be quite an inconvenience. We must watch those movies promptly!” announced Iida, getting up from the sofa so he could initiate any needed preparations. “Will everyone down here watch the movie? If so, let’s go ask our fellow classmates if there’s anyone else interested in watching it. Only then will it be a true movie night deserving of a class made up of heroes-in-training!”

“I guess we should go call Todoroki-kun, then,” said Midoriya, glancing over to both Uraraka and Asui to seek their opinion. “Satou-kun too, of course, for the popcorn and snacks.”

“You can be in charge of the 5th floor then,” acknowledged Iida with a sharp nod of his head.

“I’ll go invite Yaomomo-chan,” offered Asui. “She’ll definitely be interested in the movies and I’m sure she’ll want to provide us with some drinks to go along with popcorn. Though tea isn’t exactly the most common of drinks when it comes to movie sessions…”

“I’ll go get Jirou and Hagakure! And the speakers too, of course!” announced Ashido, readily dashing out of the communal area once again.

“Should we go invite Bakugou too?” asked Kirishima, throwing an uncertain glance at his cell phone to check the time and then redirecting it to both Kirishima and Sero. “He’s probably asleep by now, though. It’s a bit past 9 PM already.”

“After everything that happened today, I think it’s best if we just let him sleep,” pointed out Sero, a painful pang hitting the insides of his chest as he recalled the catastrophic rigged Chiba trip of the previous day. With a quick shrug of his shoulders, he added, “Not that he’d accept coming either way. You think he’d want to watch a movie with half of the people in here?”

“Right,” sighed Kirishima, slightly disheartened by that reality. He quickly shook it off, however, and returned to his usual chipper self. “Welp, let’s go invite our other bros then! I’m sure Ojirou and Tokoyami won’t say no! Even Aoyama might want to come!”

“Don’t forget about Kouda-kun and Shouji-kun,” chuckled Midoriya, walking together with Uraraka, Kirishima, Kaminari and Sero to the elevator.

“Yuwai-chan is also more than invited~” giggled Uraraka, her eyes sparkling at the prospect of once again sinking her hands on that soft, adorable furball.

The group divided itself with each floor they passed by, with only Midoriya and Uraraka climbing the building all the way to the 5th floor. As Todoroki’s bedroom was the closest one to the elevator, his door was the first one they knocked on.

“Yes?” asked Todoroki as he opened his bedroom’s door. He arched an eyebrow in wonder when he spotted some unusual visitors there. “Midoriya, Uraraka.”

“We’re about to watch a hero movie trilogy downstairs, drinks and snacks included,” explained Midoriya, Uraraka providing some follow up by enthusiastically nodding her head in acknowledgement with each addition he made. “We’ll also be borrowing Jirou-san’s speakers for a more cinema-like ambience. Do you wanna come too? I never watched those movies myself but I’ve heard quite a lot of good reviews about them from fellow All Might fan club members!”

“Yeah, that sounds good,” acknowledged Todoroki, his expressionless demeanour gaining a sparkling glint to it as he silently heard Midoriya and Uraraka’s invitation. He turned his head inside the room and asked, “What do you think, Bakugou? Do you wanna come too?”

“Kacchan’s in there too…?” softly squeaked Midoriya, his heart immediately bursting into a furious pumping rhythm out of fright. The

last thing he wanted right now was to tempt more bad luck to be redirected at him, especially if it came in the shape of the promised revenge. *I remember Todoroki-kun saying something about them still sleeping together frequently… but I guess it really is true they're doing it every night. Rather than living in the same dorm, aren't they just cohabiting at this point?*

"Oh, Bakugou-kun really is in there," noted Uraraka as she craned her neck to the side to take a closer look inside of Todoroki's Japanese-style bedroom. She quickly spotted Bakugou leisurely occupying half of his low desk. Uraraka tilted her head and innocently pointed out, "Rather than living in the same dorm, aren't you two just cohabiting at this point?"

"Uraraka-san!!" yelped Midoriya, face slightly flustered at having his mind read by his friend. Part of him was relieved that such was other people's first thought when bumping into this situation but the bigger part of him wondered if Bakugou hadn't been right with that earlier hissy fit and if he was truly corrupting other people's minds with his unusual methods of research and admiration.

"Tsk… I wanted to go to bed early tonight…" grumbled Bakugou under his breath after an annoyed click of his tongue. He got up from the low desk and grudgingly walked toward Todoroki's open door. His red eyes were tightened into a deadly glare, solemnly focused on his favourite victim, as he did so. Bakugou halted by the door, right in front of Midoriya and Uraraka, and loudly cracked his fingers. "Alright, Deku. I think it's time we sort this thing out once and for all. Gimme your phone. Now."

"Kacchan, don't break my phone… please…" beckoned Midoriya, his trembling hand obediently doing as told and removing his cell phone from his pocket to pass it over to his childhood playmate. Both he and Uraraka swallowed in dry when the electronic device was meekly placed on top of Bakugou's open hand. "Um… I swear I've already deleted the photo Uraraka-san sent me and I… ah… have no idea what you meant earlier when we were at your place so…"

“Break it? There’s no way I’d be that kind to you,” snorted Bakugou, a mischievous smirk tugging at the corner of his lips as he turned around and walked deeper into Todoroki’s room once again. He opened the sliding door to the veranda with one hand while he warmed up his other shoulder with leisure rotating motions. Faster than Midoriya could shout a ‘Kacchan, don’t!’, Bakugou catapulted the object into oblivion with an explosive throw.

“MY PHOTOS!!!” screeched Midoriya, desperately grabbing at his messy green locks for dear life. If he hadn’t had the door frame right next to him, he would have slumped down lifelessly on the floor.

Of course he’s worried about the photos only…, inwardly deadpanned Todoroki and Uraraka, the former only expressionlessly observing his friend walling in misery for his loss and the latter slowly shaking her head in disapproval.

“I wonder how long it will take you to find that fucking thing. You better hurry or it’ll start raining and the water will ruin the fruits of your disgusting hobby,” snickered Bakugou, satisfactorily closing the balcony’s door once again now that what had been promised had been settled. He obviously knew which would be Midoriya’s next move so he grabbed him by the back of his neck as soon as he walked out of Todoroki’s bedroom. “Where do you think you’re going, you slimy little cockroach? There are three movies to be watched, right? You’re not gonna leave the dorm until the credit rolls of the last damn movie come to an end. Understood, Deku?”

“Y-Yes…” whimpered Midoriya, his head lifelessly dropping in defeat. People might usually think that the most damaging part of their relationship was whenever Bakugou started swinging his fists at him or ramming him with explosions but they were wrong. The hits that hurt the most were the ones directed at his prized collection and love for pro heroes. Midoriya would more quickly welcome a punch straight to his face or gut than be robbed from any of his collectables. Hence, Bakugou had been on a roll with his childish revenge strategies

these last few days.

“Um… You two can go downstairs first, Deku-kun and I will go call Satou-kun…” hesitantly offered Uraraka in an attempt to remove the heartbroken Midoriya from Bakugou’s terrifying claws - both metaphorically and physically. Maybe to also have a long, deep conversation with Midoriya about the several different reasons why he should give up on photography and focus only on official merch…

“Okay,” expressionlessly acknowledged Todoroki, saying nothing else as he observed Uraraka walk away after rescuing Midoriya from Bakugou’s hold on his neck. Once both of them were in the elevator, he sighed and asked, “Happy now?”

“I always keep my promises,” pointed out Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. He stuffed one of his hands in his pocket and removed something from there, which he proudly wiggled right before Todoroki’s eyes. “But no, I didn’t actually throw his phone, just an empty small box you had lying around on top of your desk. I’ll return it to him once he starts having a mental breakdown for not finding it anywhere.”

“I think I no longer feel jealous of any of them because I pity them way too much for that,” deadpanned Todoroki, albeit he did roll his eyes around just the slightest.

“What do you mean, pity them? They get what they fucking deserve! An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, right?” scoffed Bakugou, storing the cell phone once again in his pocket. He crossed his arms over his chest and leisurely leaned his back on the elevator’s wall. “Besides, this much can’t even be considered anything more than child play. You think villains out there will be as kind as the almighty me? Yeah, as if! Those idiots need a reality check when it comes to petty torture and I’m more than glad to offer it to them in a healthy amount. There will come a day where they’ll crawl back to me, crying and weeping in gratitude for all the experience I provided them before

they went pro! Aren't I the kindest soul this whole school has ever seen!? Hmph!"

"I think the dictionary we bought today wouldn't describe that as kindness," deadpanned Todoroki yet again. It truly was interesting the way Bakugou used 'where there's a will, there's a way' when it came to twisting his evil deeds into a glorified pretence of benevolence. Maybe, deep down, underneath several tons of the gooey black, there were truly some good intentions from his behalf. But nothing that could be outright called 'kind' in this context.

"Well, and what would you know!? You can't even tell jealousy apart from possessiveness!" hissed Bakugou, immediately turning his head the opposite way from where Todoroki was standing. As soon as he said that, a sudden thought popped up in his brain and a knowing smirk once again crept into his lips. *He can't tell them apart now but I can help him figure it out. Hehehehe...*

Chapter 65

“EH!? Bakugou!?” yelped Kirishima as soon as the elevator’s door opened and he saw his friend coming out from it accompanied by Todoroki. His mouth remained wide open for a couple of seconds as he gawked at Bakugou leisurely walking towards the cinema-like setting they were creating in the communal area. “You’re not asleep yet? No, wait, you’re going to watch the movies with us!?”

“So what!? This part of the dorm belongs to everyone, I can be wherever I want to be!!” growled back Bakugou, dropping his body on one of the already adjusted sofas.

“No, no, no! It’s not like I don’t want you here!” corrected Kirishima right away, his body immediately zooming towards Bakugou so he could sit next to him. He slapped his back a couple of times while cheerfully grinning. “It’s the total opposite, actually. I have no idea what made you come, but I’m seriously glad you did!”

“Nothing made me come, I just did,” scoffed Bakugou while turning his face away from Kirishima. His eyes hesitantly glanced at Todoroki, who was talking with both Ashido and Jirou to offer his help with anything needed. The excited glint in Todoroki’s eyes when he extended Midoriya’s invitation to him had been what ripped Bakugou away from any early night but Kirishima - or anyone else, for that matter - didn’t need to know that. He softly clicked his tongue in annoyance and leaned back on the sofa. “When’s this thing gonna start?”

“Only popcorn, snacks and drinks are missing,” said Kirishima with an enthusiastic thumbs up. “We already made enough space for everyone in front of the TV, the sound system is about to be checked and everyone interested in the movie trilogy is already here or on their way downstairs. So the first movie should start rolling very soon.”

“Uh-huh,” acknowledged Bakugou with a dismissive shrug. With a portion of the preparations yet to be concluded and the average length of western movies, Bakugou was in for a long, long night. He wasn’t looking forward to it at all. Good thing he had his own plans to keep him wide awake or he would have returned to his bedroom by now.

“I’ll go back to the preparations then,” announced Kirishima after one final pat on Bakugou’s shoulder. However, the moment he got up, something grabbed at the back of his shirt and yanked him back to the sofa. “Bakugou?”

“You’re more useful sitting down next to me than doing whatever over there,” said Bakugou, promptly releasing Kirishima before his arm got stuck between him and the sofa.

“...You’re… no longer angry at me?” asked Kirishima with a certain caution, his grinning expression slowly melting into a more serious demeanour. “Because of, like… that bet?”

“You can *bet* your ass that I’m still fuming at you three morons for that one!” scoffed Bakugou, moodily crossing his arms over his chest. However, despite the very visible frown on his features, his expression seemed to be more extreme discomfort than outright anger. “Why don’t you try putting yourself in my shoes and imagine what it’s like to be in such an embarrassing position?”

“I don’t really know about the position itself but…” mumbled Kirishima, an awkward smile on his lips as he rubbed the back of his neck with one of his hands. His whole body stiffened in alarm when Bakugou’s demonic glare made a reappearance to fulminate him. “Right, figuratively speaking! Of course! My bad! That was terrible of us. I’m sorry. I won’t do that ever again. Not to you, not to anyone else. Just… maybe give me or Sero a heads-up before you two… ah, you know… Our rooms are right next to yours and the soundproof is a bit faulty so…”

“Oh, so now we need your permission to have sex, is that it!?” hissed Bakugou, strongly stomping the heel of his foot on Kirishima’s. After making sure he had ground on Kirishima’s foot nice and hard, Bakugou removed his foot from on top of him and let his body slide against the sofa slightly more. “Neither of you will have to worry about that from now on. It was partially our fault too so enough with this conversation already!”

I’m the one who will have to be on my toes for whatever it is that Todoroki is planning for after our graduation…, inwardly grumbled Bakugou, his gaze once again settling on Todoroki, now busy talking with a disheartened Midoriya, who had already returned to the ground floor together with Uraraka and Satou. *For as scatterbrained as he can be, he’ll definitely never let that one go…*

“Abstinence until graduation!?” gasped Kirishima, nearly having a heart attack due to that unexpected reveal. “Oh man… Now I’m really feeling guilty… When I said give us a heads-up, I didn’t mean it in the sense of not-”

“I. Said. Enough!” growled Bakugou while giving a frighteningly precise blow with his fingers on the side of Kirishima’s ribcage. Not having been able to harden his torso on time, his victim loudly howled in pain, eyes getting tearstained as he dramatically rubbed the sore area with his hands.

“What, back to your torturous shenanigans already, Bakugou?” snorted Kaminari, softly shaking his head disapproval as he walked closer to his two friends.

“You, too, sit,” commanded Bakugou, gesturing with his thumb towards the empty space next to Kirishima.

“No, seriously, are the torture plans really back…?” squeaked Kaminari, slowly, cautiously doing as told and taking a seat next to Kirishima. “Are they, Bakugou? Can’t you give us a break already!?”

“What torture plans? I’m just here to watch some movies,” leisurely said Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. Having said that, there was little to deny when it came to the mischievous evil smirk present on his lips.

We’re screwed, inwardly groaned Kirishima and Kaminari, the former even lifelessly dropping his head on top of the latter’s shoulder.

“Sorry for the wait, guys! The popcorn is ready!” announced Satou, carrying two large trays with several smaller bowls on his hands. “You have three flavours to choose from: salt, butter and caramel.”

“Caramel!!” erupted a chorus of female voices, with Ashido, Hagakure, Jirou, Yaoyorozu, Asui and Uraraka all crowding up around the tray that carried the caramel-coated popcorn bowls.

“I’m gonna go for good, old salted popcorn!” announced Kaminari, excitedly swiping one of the bowls from the tray.

“I’ll go for the butter ones, then! That way we can share them!” suggested Kirishima, also taking another bowl from Satou’s trays and nestling it on top of his lap. “What about you, Bakugou?”

“Don’t want any,” grumbled Bakugou, a low growl nearly escaping from his throat. Todoroki was still stubbornly focusing on other people only and completely leaving him on the sidelines! *Just sitting on the same sofa as Kirishima and Kaminari won’t do, I guess. Time to raise the jealousy-meter to the next level!*

“Are you sure?” asked Kirishima, leisurely picking up a few popcorns and stuffing them in his mouth. He was a meat lover but the sweetness of those popcorn was to die for. “Damn, these are good! If you don’t get some for yourself now, you won’t be able to later, no matter how much you whine about it. They’re gonna be all gone before the first movie ends!”

“Fine… I’ll just eat yours,” sighed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. When presented with an opportunity, Bakugou was known for never letting it slip between his fingers. Hence, he caught Kirishima’s wrist as he was motioning a few more popcorn to his mouth and changed its course to his, eating the sugary snacks directly from Kirishima’s hand. “Meh, kinda normal for popcorn, I guess.”

Kinda not normal for you!!!!, inwardly yelped Kirishima and Kaminari, both utterly flabbergasted at the way Bakugou had just consumed the snacks he had been refusing up until a couple of seconds ago.

Hehe, how do you like them now, Todoroki? Ready to rise up the temperature at the communal area with your burning jealousy?, snickered Bakugou in the back of his mind as he slowly switched his gaze to his lover while chewing on the popcorn. Todoroki was peacefully accepting a bowl of popcorn from Satou’s trays while discussing with Yaoyorozu and Tokoyami which drinks they should get to go along with the snacks. *That damned dense idiot!! I’m so gonna make you burn this motherfuckin’ dorm down!!*

“Hey, Dunce Face! Gimme some of yours too,” instructed Bakugou, gesturing his hand towards Kaminari to urge him closer.

“No way! If you want to share, do it like Kirishima and get some popcorn of your own!” refused Kaminari, immediately cradling his bowl against his chest, far away from the demon overlord’s reach. “Until then, these belong to me and Kirishima only!”

“Stop being so damn stingy and hand them over!” roared Bakugou, lunging his hand towards the half-hidden bowl so he could snatch it to himself. Kaminari acted just as fast and put it even further away from Bakugou by stretching the arm opposite to him in the other direction. That only ended up fueling his bubbling frustration even further. “I said to hand them over!”

“Woah! That was a close one!” yelped Kirishima, quickly lifting his bowl from his lap just as it was about to be run over by Bakugou amidst his spree to get to Kaminari. He saved the sugary snacks from an even earlier end but that only resulted in him getting stuck underneath Bakugou as he crawled over him and the sofa alike. *Seriously, what’s with him now? Sleep deprivation? Is sleep deprivation making his noggin crazy again???*

“You’re not gonna steal any more of our popcorn without retributing with the same delicious coin!” argued Kaminari, persistently keeping the bowl raised high in the air while pushing Bakugou’s charge away from him with his free hand. It wasn’t working all that well, though. Bakugou was already running over Kirishima’s upper legs and creeping up on one of his. It was just a matter of time for him to snag the salted popcorn away. In a last attempt to salvage his possessions, Kaminari stretched his arm as much as he could to place the bowl on top of the backrest’s edge. “Ngh… Just… a bit... more…!”

“Oh no, you don’t!” yapped Bakugou, also stretching one of his arms to its limits to reach the sought goal. He was taller than Kaminari and his arms were longer too but that hand on his shoulder keeping him stuck to that portion of the sofa only was a big setback to his victory.

“Nnnnngh…! Hah! Done!” With a bit more of perseverance and an undying hunger to devour his snacks throughout actual movie time, Kaminari came out as the winning side the moment he managed to neatly place the bowl on top of the backrest. Now with both hands free, he could more easily placate Bakugou’s advance and halt his robbery once and for all. Kaminari slapped his hand on Bakugou’s

chest and pushed him back to his seat - the moment he did so, his brain completely forgot about what he was trying to do and focused solemnly on the tender texture underneath his palm. “Holy moly, what’s with your pecs!? Are muscles supposed to feel like this!?”

“.....”

He’s so dead now…, inwardly cringed the whole class, the communal area having turned deadly silent the moment Kaminari’s booming voice permeated every nook and cranny of the spacious division. Worse than what Kaminari had accidentally blurted out was the blatant groping motion of his hand against Bakugou’s chest.

“.....Huh?” hissed Bakugou, his gaze tightening into a glare as he looked from Kaminari’s flabbergasted face to the arm stabbing toward his upper body.

Oh, shoot… I’m so dead now…, inwardly sobbed Kaminari, his face paling instantly the moment he noticed the growing frown on Bakugou’s face.

Hah! Thank god I’m surrounded by idiots, snorted Bakugou in the back of his mind. Once again, a jealousy-inducing scenario was served to him on a platter. Not to mention, he had the entire class’ eyes on them right now - Todoroki included. It took him a monumental amount of self-control to keep himself from smirking in victory but he somehow managed to only say, “It’s totally different without any cloth- Ack…!”

“Bakugou, I think you already terrorised the whole class plenty for a single day,” intervened Todoroki, pulling Bakugou further away from Kaminari by yanking at the back of his upper clothes. He wrapped his other arm around his torso and fully ripped him away from on top of his two friends, easily transporting him further away from that packed sofa to another that was still void of occupants. “How about we save

the rest for tomorrow?"

"I won't stop until I get this whole building burnt down to a crisp!!" howled Bakugou, trashing his arms and legs around to shoo Todoroki away.

"If that happened, those two upstairs would get caught up in it too," pointed out Todoroki with a roll of his eyes as he carefully lowered Bakugou on the empty sofa.

"...!!" gasped Bakugou despite himself, halting all trashing and wiggling motions instantly. He dropped his back on the sofa's backrest and crossed his arms over his chest, his whole face creased with a sour frown. "Tsk… Saved by a dumb plushie and its disproportional tree…"

"Here. You can eat from my bowl. They're the salty ones," offered Todoroki, placing his bowl on top of Bakugou's lap after he went to fetch his snacks and drinks. He also motioned a glass towards him after sitting next to him. "I got you a coke. You okay with it?"

"Yeah…" grumbled Bakugou, promptly taking the glass from Todoroki's hand to moodily suckled on the straw.

As expected of beast tamer Todoroki!!!, inwardly bawled class 1-A, so very glad that the storm passed by them without causing total chaos.

With that problem(?) solved, they could finally begin their very first movie night.

-.-

Argh, shit… I'm sleepy as heck…!!, inwardly groaned Bakugou, stifling yet another yawn behind his hand. It wasn't that the movie was boring per se, much less now that the first one of the trilogy was reaching the climax fighting scene; it was simply that he wasn't wired to stay awake until late several nights in a row. He was way too used to the 'early sleeper, early riser' during weekdays and 'sleep compensation' during their days off.

Everyone else in the living room seemed to be doing more than okay. The usual loud group was excitedly yelling their lungs out in encouragement to the fighting heroes while with their noses nearly glued to the screen. Midoriya constantly fluctuated between raving over the movie and stressing about the weather conditions outside. Everyone else was their usual, overly enthusiastic selves as they also rooted for the main character's victory. Even Todoroki was in expressionless sparkly mode as he stared at the TV screen, every now and then sneaking one more popcorn into his mouth from the bowl still being kept on Bakugou's lap.

But not Bakugou. He was already completely wrecked by drowsiness.

"Ngh…" softly groaned Bakugou, his back sliding sideways against the sofa until his arm bumped into Todoroki. His head soon followed, soundlessly falling on top of his shoulder.

"Hm? What's the matter, Bakugou?" whispered Todoroki, readily removing the bowl from Bakugou's lap when he noticed it was about to fall on the floor. Once that had been set aside, he lovingly ruffled his head. "Too sleepy already, huh… Should we go back to my room now?"

"You wanna watch the movies, right...?" mumbled Bakugou as he sluggishly rubbed his forehead on Todoroki's shoulder.

“I can watch them another time,” chuckled Todoroki, patting and ruffling his lover’s head some more as that seemed to be what he was asking for. “I can ask Ashido to rent them again or go rent them myself.”

“Nah, don’t bother…” mumbled Bakugou, once again stifling another yawn. He lifted his head from Todoroki’s shoulder, one of his hands slowly climbing up in the air to rub his sleepy eyes. “I’ll just go to sleep first…”

“Oh. Okay…” interjected Todoroki, his expressionless excited demeanour losing a considerable amount of sparkles when he saw Bakugou reading himself to get up from the sofa. Somehow, he had the feeling this would happen the moment he saw him falling asleep while laid down alone on his bed. He knew that he’d go back to sleeping on his own as soon as his sleeping disorder was fixed.

Todoroki was glad that Bakugou had finally overcome certain events from the past and had healed from the wounds they had caused in his heart, but it was a bittersweet feeling to see him leaving the comforts of his embrace so soon.

“Good night…” mumbled Bakugou as he got up from the sofa… only to then sink back down on it, his body sprawled on the soft cushions while his head dropped right on top of Todoroki’s lap and one of his arms curled around his waist.

“Eh…?” gasped Todoroki, momentarily frozen in place as he processed what had just happened. When Bakugou said he was going to sleep first, he hadn’t meant that he was going back to his room to get some shut-eye but rather that he was just going to sleep right there and then, on Todoroki’s lap, in the middle of a movie binge-watching group session in the communal area?

A soft smile on his lips, Todoroki gently caressed Bakugou's head as he returned his attention to the first movie's big finale.

"Ohhhh! That was one hell of a movie!" squealed Ashido, excitedly jumping up from the floor - halfway through the movie, Ashido, Kaminari and Kirishima had gravitated from their seats to the floor area right in front of the TV, such was their enthusiasm on what was happening during those action-packed scenes. She readily grabbed the DVD case of the second movie while leaving Kaminari up to the task of removing the disk from the DVD player. "Next one! Next one!!!"

"That scene where that hero jumped right in front of some civilians to keep them from being caught by that blast… So manly..." sniffled Kirishima, his hand clenched tightly into a fist. "So glad he made it to the end of the movie alive… Losing a man like him so early in the trilogy would be a waste! Right, Bakugou?"

"Wait, are you for real?" snorted Sero, doing his best to not start laughing when he glanced towards one of the sofas and saw that scene on display for everyone to see. "He fell asleep in the middle of an action movie?"

"I knew it was already way too late for him…" sighed Kirishima, a gentle smile curling up the corner of his lips. "I never see him around the dorm after 9 PM."

"Teenagers are supposed to be good at staying up until late but I guess Bakugou-chan does everything at his own pace, including his circadian rhythm," pointed out Asui, yet again throwing an inward 'cute~' at the sight of her sleeping classmate.

"Bakugou can stay awake until pretty late when he needs to,"

deadpanned Todoroki, his fingers still unconsciously rustling through Bakugou's spiky blonde locks. "It's just that we didn't get much sleep last night."

"Todoroki-kun, too much information…" groaned Midoriya and followed by a facepalm.

"Such passionate youth~" whistled Kaminari, snickering to himself as he switched the previous disk with the next one.

"Will it be okay for Bakugou-san to continue sleeping here, I wonder?" sighed Yaoyorozu, a motherly worried glint in her eyes as she glanced over to the sofa in question. "It's pretty chilly during the night now. And some of our classmates will continue getting quite rowdy while watching the next two movies… Should I create some blankets for him, at the very least?"

"No, don't bother. I'll take him upstairs," said Todoroki, carefully adjusting his sitting position before he started working on finding a way to pick up the completely limp and dead to the world Bakugou. "Sorry, Ashido, you invited us all to watch your movies and we ended up not being able to stick around until the end."

"Nah, don't worry about it," dismissed Ashido with a wave of her hand. "I'll give you the name of the rental store I usually use, just in case you two want to watch the two last movies on another day!"

"Thanks," acknowledged Todoroki with a small nod. He somehow managed to pull Bakugou's inert body closer to him but it was still quite the challenge to get him out of the sofa without twisting or pulling this or that body part too much. Todoroki groaned while rolling his eyes around. "C'mon, Bakugou, cooperate a little."

“Nngh… Lemme sleep…” mumbled Bakugou, hand groping around Todoroki’s body and sofa, possibly in search of anything to yank over his head to cover himself and enter in hibernation mode.

“You can sleep all you want upstairs,” sighed Todoroki, one more strategic pull and some turning and sliding finally enabling him to get up from the sofa with Bakugou held against his chest like an oversized teddy bear. A small chuckle escaped his throat when Bakugou wrapped his arms around his neck and leaned his half-asleep face against his shoulder blade. If he had also wrapped his legs around his hips rather than leave them hanging, he would have definitely looked like a certain marsupial. Todoroki gave a small nod with his head and bid his farewells to the rest of the class. “Good night, then. Oh, right. Before I go… Midoriya, here.”

“Eh?” interjected Midoriya, caught completely off guard when Todoroki fished something from Bakugou’s pocket and threw it in his direction. He hurriedly picked the object mid-air, not wanting to risk dropping whatever it was. “Huh? EH!? My cell phone!? I thought Kacchan had…!”

“You should know better than anyone that Bakugou’s not as mean as everyone thinks him to be,” pointed out Todoroki with a small shrug of his shoulders.

“Ah… Right. Thanks, Todoroki-kun,” said Midoriya, happily grinning at his friend while waving his good nights at them both.

“Nn… Movee night over…?” mumbled Bakugou, his voice slightly slurred due to his drowsiness. The paced rocking of their bodies as Todoroki walked could make him fall asleep at any second.

“Yeah, movie night is over,” chuckled Todoroki, omitting completely that it was only the end of the movie night for the both of them and

that said entertainment session would continue for several more hours for the rest of their class. Bakugou could yell at him all he wanted tomorrow after finding out about their strategic retreat.

“You had fun…?” sighed Bakugou, sluggishly nuzzling his face against Todoroki’s shoulder blade.

“Yeah, I had fun,” shortly laughed Todoroki, quickly removing one of his hands from underneath Bakugou’s butt to press on the elevator’s button. Seeing as everyone was downstairs, the doors opened right away.

“Good…” softly breathed out Bakugou, a small smile shadowing his lips as he finally closed his sleepy eyes to get some rest.

Only the soft metallic rattling of gears pulling and sliding could be heard inside of the communal area after their departure. Everyone on the ground floor of Heights Alliance was in complete silence.

“For some reason… Kacchan looked so cute just now that I feel like forgiving him for everything he’s done to me…” muttered Midoriya, his eyes open wide as he stared a hole through the elevator’s closed door.

“Cuteness is justice so I can’t blame you, Midoriya-chan,” commented Asui, her heart thundering inside of her chest due to cuteness overload.

“I never thought I’d say this about Bakugou… I mean, maybe about Todoroki, yes, but that’s beside the point!” started Hagakure, getting slightly side-tracked halfway through her mumbles. She gestured one of her invisible hands towards the elevator and pointed her index finger at it - though all everyone else saw was an empty sleeve

motioning in that direction. “Those are relationship goals right there!!! Mineta, that’s what girls want their boyfriends to be like, not whatever perversions you have in your mind. Watch and learn something already!”

“I-I don’t want to get involved with them any more than this!!” shrieked Mineta, furiously shaking his head in denial while pushing his body further and further away from the crowd. However, he quickly backtracked a little bit and, after softly clearing his throat, inquired, “But… Just for the record, which one of them may you be speaking of…?”

“BOTH!” responded Class 1-A en masse, girls and boys alike. True love transcended gender, after all.

-.-

“There. Now you can sleep,” sighed Todoroki, gently laying Bakugou down on top of his futon. When Midoriya came knocking on his door, they had been getting ready to go to bed, which was now turning to be a godsend. All they had to do was lie down, turn off the light and get down to sleep business.

“Ngh… Cold…” grumbled Bakugou, a shiver crawling up his body from head to toes due to the coldness of the futon’s fabric.

“It’ll warm up so-” said Todoroki, his voice getting cut off halfway through his sentence when a hand yanked him down. His whole body was promptly captured by Bakugou’s arms and legs, rendering him completely motionless on the futon. “Pfft… Hehe…”

“...whatcha laughin’ at…? ...pickin’ a fight again…?” mumbled Bakugou with a sleepy voice, stifling a yawn directly against

Todoroki's chest as he nestled against his body.

"Not that. The other day you managed to fall asleep on your own, right?" explained Todoroki after a small roll of his eyes. Only Bakugou would mistake happiness for a fight starter. He hugged Bakugou back with the only arm that had been left free from his tight embrace and placed his hand on top of his head, his fingers once again resuming with the same fleeting caresses from when they were watching the movie. "So I was thinking that you were going to return to sleep on your own as soon as the opportunity presented itself. And you just had that opportunity. Yet you choose to sleep with me. So I'm feeling really happy right now. So happy I can't help but laugh and want to hug you and kiss you and hug you some more."

"Argh… Too hot now…" groaned Bakugou, doing little to nothing as the arm wrapped around his back tightened considerably and a couple of gentle, ticklish pecks were given to the top of his head. He released a long, slow sigh once Todoroki deadpanned a quick 'sorry' and halted his loving cuddles. "I can sleep… wherever the hell… I want… And I want it *here* … So shut up and give it to me…"

"Okay," acknowledged Todoroki, ruffling Bakugou's head some more before he dropped his arm back down on the futon so they could at long last sleep. He could now understand why Bakugou had been so persistent at the beginning regarding finding out a solution for his sleep disorder. It was one thing to want to sleep with someone and another to have no choice but to be next to someone to be able to sleep. Todoroki had welcomed that dependence with open arms then and he'd surely do it in the future too if it ever occurred again - but the more simplistic desire to share a bed had a much sweeter warmth to it.

"...Todoroki… give it to me… everything…" sluggishly babbled Bakugou, his long, paced sleepish sighs and yawns turning his usually raspy, screechy voice into a fuzzy whisper. "...all of your firsts… and likes… and whatever else… good… and the jealousy… and possessiveness… and all the… shitty stuff… too… want it… all…"

“Yeah,” said Todoroki, comfortably nestling closer to Bakugou, a content smile on his lips as he also closed his eyes to try to fall asleep.

Todoroki might have ‘won’ the unofficial love declaration match but Bakugou had by far the best proposal.

Chapter 66

“Doesn’t a sky this blue make you feel all warm and fuzzy inside?” sighed Todoroki, leisurely staring at the window while holding a cup of lukewarm tea in his hands. “It’s just… haa… so nice…”

“Todoroki-kun, you do know we’re already reduced to single-digit temperatures, right?” pointed out Midoriya, an eyebrow slightly arched as he lifted his gaze from his cell phone’s screen. He glanced sideways to the window and inwardly released a sigh. “The sky is not even that blue. It's about to rain, maybe actually snow again.”

“It’s blue enough for me,” said Todoroki, expressionlessly sipping his green tea.

“You’ve been in a really good mood lately, Todoroki-kun,” chuckled Uraraka, all geared up to withstand the winter cold once she exited the dorm. By her feet was a travelling bag, filled with clothes and other things she wanted to take back with her to her parents' house. "Though it's currently winter, your mind and heart are totally in springtime mode."

"Well… I guess you can put it that way," confessed Todoroki after giving it a short thought.

Todoroki couldn't exactly say that he was in a good mood, as it was more of a perpetual thing rather than a fleeting state of mind. He was wholeheartedly enjoying life as it was and not even his lack of facial expression could hide that fact.

Weeks, months had passed and winter had fully dominated the outside landscape, with accentuated temperature drops, wind, rain and occasional snowfall in the Tokyo region. Winter vacation had arrived

for all students throughout Japan, Christmas had been celebrated all over the world and the upcoming year would arrive in a matter of days.

Everything that had happened throughout those weeks was what had put Todoroki in a constant state of bliss. Schoolwork and hero practice exercises were going according to plan, as it was to be expected of the number 2 freshman. Their daily routine had calmed down to the point where hardly anyone bothered his and Bakugou's more domestic approach to dorm life, as their relationship status went from novelty to the norm. And, obviously, it went without saying that his relationship with Bakugou was the same discrete lovey-dovey with a few sprinkles of hotter intimacy that it had always been. Perhaps now with the added benefit that, albeit they still flopped in one way or another, their dates had been running surprisingly smoothly as of late. What would start as a disaster was successfully turned into a best-case scenario with a quick adjust from them here and there.

So if someone was to ask Todoroki how he had been doing lately, the only thing he could answer was that life was great, the world was great, everything was great - even if others couldn't see it as such.

"I mean, how could I not be in a good mood?" added Todoroki, his expressionless demeanour vibrating in sparkly happiness. Truly a blinding sight to those not used to it yet.

"I guess that's true," chuckled Midoriya, doing his best to suppress a roll of his eyes. Luckily for him - and everyone else living with them in the dorm - a happy Todoroki meant a happy Bakugou, which also meant no one in Class 1-A was being used in any form or shape as a metaphorical punching bag for their resident ferocious beast's evil schemes and revenge plans as of late. *Since we nearly destroyed ourselves when they started dating, we ended up learning all about the best amount of distance we should keep between us and them if we want to preserve our lives. It took time, yes, but Kacchan and Todoroki-kun are as much of a threat to us now as two defused bombs. For as long as we don't press the wrong button, they won't start ticking down on any of us all over again.*

"Ochako-chan, sorry for the wait," apologised Asui, covered from head to toes in several layers of clothes, coats and scarfs to ward off as much cold as possible. It would be catastrophic if she was to accidentally begin the hibernation process while travelling back to her parents' house, after all. "I'm all ready to go now."

"Let's get going then!" acknowledged Uraraka with a beaming smile. She picked up the travelling bag from the floor and placed its strap over her shoulder. "I'll see you guys next year then! Enjoy the rest of your winter vacation!"

"Send some photos when you go visit the shrine during New Year's day," added Asui, also waving goodbye to her friends.

"Will do! Send our best regards to your families," said Midoriya, waving back at his two friends. "I hope you also have a good New Year back home!"

"With Uraraka and Asui also gone, now it's just us, Bakugou, Shouji and Tokoyami at the dorm," noted Todoroki, sipping some more of his tea once the front door allowing a leak of outside cold air was closed.

"Not for very long, though," awkwardly laughed Midoriya, his hand softly rubbing the back of his neck. "I'll be going back home tomorrow too. My mom has finished the whole remodelling work to the living room and kitchen area of our apartment so she finally gave me her okay to go back home for winter vacation. I think Tokoyami-kun and Shouji-kun were also saying something about going home for the holidays tomorrow morning, if I'm not mistaken."

"So it'll be just me and Bakugou at the dorm until the next semester starts," deadpanned Todoroki, the intensity of sparkles in his gaze

tripling instantly. "Finally."

"Your denseness sometimes really makes your words sting, even though you don't mean to be hurtful," sighed Midoriya, his shoulders dropping down slightly. He thought they had all been in their best behaviour these last few weeks but it seemed that still wasn't good enough for the wonder couple. "Anyway. What about you, Todoroki-kun? Are you really going to spend the whole winter vacation at the dorm? You're not going to spend New Year's with your siblings?"

"Between my family as it currently is and here… I prefer to stay at the dorm," said Todoroki, his gaze slowly cascading towards the teacup on his hands. "Bakugou will also be here so it's not like I'll be all on my own."

"Won't Kacchan go back home too, though?" pointed out Midoriya, an eyebrow slightly arched. He could understand Todoroki's hesitation regarding going back to his father's house during the holiday season but it still felt somewhat weird that his family - that his doting older siblings and overbearing father - hadn't said anything about it yet. Not that Midoriya could butt in more than he already had. What he could do, however, was try to piece Todoroki elsewhere for those festivities. "I'm sure Mitsuki-san has told Kacchan to go back home for New Year's at least."

"Not that I'm aware of," answered Todoroki, the sudden vibration on his pants' pocket slightly jolting him out of other thoughts. He grabbed his cell phone, checked the message's sender and settled it down on the table once again. His deadpan sparkly happy expression had already been replaced with an unsatisfied frown. "But I'll ask him once he comes back from his jog."

"Kacchan's still running outside with this cold?" inquired Midoriya, a shiver running down his spine just at the thought of the freezing temperature outside being augmented even further by the running speed. He had long switched to indoor exercises and muscle-training

only but Bakugou seemed to not want to give up on his usual training regimen, regardless of the season.

"He wants to get used to the cold weather as soon as possi-" started Todoroki, only to be interrupted by another received message and the noisy vibration it caused on top of the table. He didn't check his cell phone this time, though. "Tsk…"

"Perhaps it would be better to reply back?" meekly suggested Midoriya. By the steadily growing frown creasing Todoroki's brows, he could easily figure out who the sender of those messages was. "Or at least… read them, maybe?"

"....." Todoroki stared resentfully at the cell phone for long minutes, almost as if he intended to freeze the electronic device with his cold glare only. However, he begrudgingly ended up grabbing his cell phone and unlocking it once a third message was received. Todoroki read the messages, word by word, and once he finished, he dropped his face against the table, loudly groaning in dismay.

“W-What? What does it say?” worriedly inquired Midoriya, his eyes fluttering back and forth between his groaning friend and the cell phone held tight on his hand. “I-Is it that bad?”

“That bastard told me to go back home for New Year’s…” grumbled Todoroki, sluggishly sliding his face against the table to turn his glaring eyes at Midoriya. “If I don’t say anything within 30 minutes, he’ll come to pick me up himself…”

“Well… Um… Er… New Year’s a busy time for pro heroes so… it’s not like he’ll be at home the whole time, right…?” pointed out Midoriya in an attempt to console the fuming Todoroki. It seemed that it wasn’t just those living at the dorm that were evolving the strategies used to deal with Todoroki and Bakugou; pro hero Endeavor was also

adopting new measures to get his son to reply to his messages. “And… ah… you could also, um, for example, leave after breakfast, go somewhere during the whole day and come back for dinner? Use the chance to spend some more time with your mother! Oh! And your siblings too! Not to mention, we all live in the same town. We can meet whenever you want. And Kacchan wouldn’t say no to meeting you every day outside school either.”

“Yeah… Thanks, Midoriya,” said Todoroki after a tired sigh. He picked himself up from the table and grabbed his cell phone once again. There was a certain bitter taste on his tongue as he wrote his first message to his father in quite a few weeks but he knew. Todoroki knew that if this had happened a couple of months ago, the bitterness would have tasted worse than a festering wound. Now, it was starting to resemble more a prickling scab that he only noticed there whenever something pressed directly on it. “I’ll use this opportunity to earn myself another visit to his house.”

“I think he’d invite you to his house once again even if you didn’t use this as an excuse,” chuckled Midoriya. It seemed his job was now done. The rest lay in Todoroki’s and his father’s hands - whether this home visit would make their father-son relationship better or even worse was up to them and how they dealt with each other’s presence under the same roof.

“Dating him doesn’t make him any less stubborn or tenacious,” confessed Todoroki, his face finally regaining some of its prior shine. However, just as he was recovering his lovestruck aura, the dorm’s front door opened and made way for the entrance of someone that flushed his happiness down the drain once again. It was usually the opposite but the prospect of separation, for as short as it might be, was hitting Todoroki harder than he expected. So he painfully groaned as he observed his lover waltzing towards the kitchen area. “Bakugou… Sorry…”

“Huh? Sorry about what?” inquired Bakugou, his hands busy filling a glass with water for rehydration after such a long run in the frosty weather outside. An eyebrow was slightly arched on his brows as he

gulped down the water and switched his gaze to the heartbroken expression on Todoroki's face. "What? What happened this time?"

"I was told to go home for New Year's…" nearly sobbed Todoroki, his body deflating completely against the chair as he broke the news to his lover. Yeah, he definitely didn't want to go home. Not because his father would be there, not because it was a place filled with bad memories - he just didn't want to be apart from Bakugou after so many months of living together, sleeping together, being together.

"Geez, don't scare me like that!!" groaned Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. He shoved the used glass inside of the dishwasher and picked up the sports towel he had left on the dining table on his way to his classmates. Bakugou obviously slapped the back of Todoroki's head as he wiped the sweat out of his forehead and the sides of his face. "So what if you have to go home for New Year's? Grow a pair already, will ya? Winter break will be over in a few days so do what you have to do there and then come back crawling to me!"

"You're not going to miss me? Not even a little bit?" inquired Todoroki, sluggishly turning his head upwards so he could peer at Bakugou with his sad, miserable eyes. "With me leaving today and Midoriya, Tokoyami and Shouji leaving tomorrow, you'll be all alone here at the dorm, you know?"

"Nah, I'm going back to my folks' place tomorrow too," said Bakugou with a small shrug, much to Todoroki's chagrin. "The old hag has been nagging me non-stop since yesterday about going back home for New Year's and shit. Since you're also going back to your place, now's a good time to cave in to her persistence, I guess."

So Kacchan's not going to deny the part about missing Todoroki-kun? , inwardly noted Midoriya, silently switching his gaze back and forth between his childhood playmate and his friend.

“I see…” sighed Todoroki, finally fully resigning himself to his fate. He only lifted his resentful gaze from his cell phone when a hand was dropped on top of his head and strongly ruffled his hair.

“C’mon, I’ll help you pack your stuff,” said Bakugou, giving a small jerk with his chin to gesture towards the elevator. He placed the sports towel over his shoulders and started walking in its direction but he soon got rooted in place by a larger body. Bakugou released an annoyed groan while rolling his eyes around, his elbow softly hitting Todoroki from behind in an attempt to push his sticky boyfriend away from him. “Will you let go of me, you idiot? I just came back from my run, I’m drenched in sweat!”

“I don’t mind. I love how sweet you smell when you’re fresh out of your runs,” confessed Todoroki, his feet slowly dragging against the floor as Bakugou forced his way forward even with a lot of additional weight attached to him.

“Fuckin’ disgus- Ahh!” admonished Bakugou but a slick, warm tongue lapping at the back of his neck made his cussing become a surprised yelp. Or moan, really, but for pride maintenance’s sake, Bakugou opted to think of it as just a yelp. “Damn it, Todoroki! Where the fuck do you think we are!?”

Both slowly turned their heads towards the dining tables, Bakugou with a shaky blushing expression, Todoroki with his face as blank as a new sheet of paper.

“I-I-I saw nothing, heard nothing!!!” denied Midoriya right away, furiously shaking his head while covering his ears with his hands for dear life.

“Let’s go pack my things,” deadpanned Todoroki with a monotone voice. He adjusted his hold on Bakugou a little bit while bracing

himself for some heavy lifting. Then he just smoothly hoisted Bakugou a couple of inches from the floor and made a beeline towards the elevator while carrying him. Once inside of the elevator and with the doors closed, Todoroki plopped Bakugou back on the floor with a satisfied sigh. “Our escape was a success.”

“The hell it was!” roared Bakugou, slapping the back of Todoroki’s head yet again. He readily pressed the elevator’s button to his floor and then crossed his arms over his chest, his lips pursed into a pout. “It’s always the same thing with you… You wanna get the Shitty Nerd in the burns unit for New Year’s, is that it...?”

“I forgot he was there,” blurted out Todoroki with a small shrug. He noticed the still present angry frown on Bakugou’s face, however, so he tried changing the subjects. “We’re going to your room? I thought you were going to help me pack.”

“I am,” sourly said Bakugou, shutting up completely throughout the rest of the elevator trip. He darted into the corridor as soon as the bell rang and the doors slowly started sliding open, stomping into his bedroom with a quite moody walking stance. “Damn it… I don’t wanna do this… Shit, I really don’t wanna do it…”

“Bakugou?” called Todoroki, head tilted as he obediently followed after Bakugou like an imprinted duckling.

“Here!!” roared Bakugou, yanking the koala plush toy out of his nightstand, far away from its partnered bonsai tree, and slamming it straight on Todoroki’s face. “I’m opening an exception this time! Take that stupid thing with you. But you’re not allowed to think of that ugly motherfucker as me, ya hear me!? I’m leaving that annoyance with you only because I’m taking the bonsai with me and like hell I’m bringing a plushie to my parents’ house too! That’s the only reason, okay!? Just that!!”

“In your own way, you really are gentle, Bakugou,” said Todoroki, a small smile curling up the corner of his lips. He held the plush toy in his hand while he used the other one to gently hug Bakugou’s lower back. “Can I call you and text you?”

“Yeah,” shortly grumbled Bakugou, his head turned the other way to avoid Todoroki’s loving gaze.

“And can I go visit you at your house?” asked Todoroki next, craning his neck slightly to the side so he could take a peek at his lover’s face. “Can we go visit the shrine together on the first day of the year?”

“Yeah,” grumbled Bakugou yet again, this time accompanied by a small nod and the ever so slight turn of his head towards Todoroki.

“I’ll do my best then,” acknowledged Todoroki with a nod of his own.

Challenging days were ahead of him but, if Bakugou placed his trust in him, all Todoroki had to do was blow his mind away with even better results. That’s what he had honestly thought at that moment.

Nothing ended up going according to plan, however.

Chapter 67

“I-It’s been a while since we’ve all had dinner together, hasn’t it?” said Fuyumi with a certain hesitation, slowly motioning her chopsticks to her mouth. As it was to be expected, the response she obtained was a glacial silence from three different fronts. Hence, she also continued eating her dinner in a fidgety silence.

Mealtime at the Todoroki residence had always had this type of tense atmosphere to it, regardless of the time of the day, regardless of the season or time of the year. Silent meals with only the occasional sound of cutlery and plates clattering against each other and a couple of vague questions and answers were the norm for pro hero Endeavor’s three children.

That was something that Fuyumi would like to see change, if possible. It was also something that their father, Todoroki Enji, wanted to see changed, unbeknown to Fuyumi and his two sons.

“Shouto. I heard quite a lot of good things about your performance during the terrorist hacking case of a hero exhibition,” suddenly said Enji, to everyone’s surprise. He settled down his chopsticks on top of the wooden rest and focused his stern gaze on his youngest child. “You were the first one to escape the dungeon-like structure the extremist’s Quirk created, surpassing all of the pro heroes that were on the site at the time. Well done. As expected of my son.”

“Yeah. Thanks,” shortly acknowledged Todoroki, not halting his chewing in the least so he could hasten dinner time as much as possible. If Todoroki was to be more precise and correct his father’s conclusions, rather than him being the first one to escape the dungeon-creating Quirk, it had been his joint work with Bakugou and their incompatibility with the extremist’s Quirk that had pushed them into the express route out of the dungeon. But that would take too many spoken words to explain so Todoroki just let it be.

“However, I heard your homeroom teacher, Eraser Head, grounded you with a full month of school lockdown on the following weekend,” proceeded Enji, his gaze tightening slightly more as he closely observed his son. “I don’t remember any major incident happening around U.A. during that weekend. So what exactly happened for you to receive such a long punishment from your teacher?”

“Bakugou and I mishandled a Quirk incident while out shopping,” explained Todoroki with the shortest and most concise version of that very unusual day off. Once again, explaining the situation detail by detail would be far too lengthy for him and he also didn’t feel like giving a full report on his date with Bakugou to his father so an abridged summary it was. However, just recalling getting lost in the woods, running from one side of a small beach to the other, taking several trains back and forth the main Japanese island and all the fun and happy memories condensed together due to a single Quirk incident inadvertently brought forward a small smile to Todoroki’s lips. “Aizawa-sensei punished us because we didn’t report the Quirk incident like we should have and withheld important information.”

“Bakugou? Oh, the kid who stole the first place from you during the sports festival yet dared to let himself be kidnapped by the League of Villains a couple of weeks later,” scoffed Enji with a mocking tone.

“...” The small smile was completely wiped out of his face and replaced by an angry frown the moment Todoroki heard those words slip out of his father’s mouth.

Oh no…, inwardly groaned Fuyumi, gulping down in dry as she observed the air around her youngest brother become icy cold. She turned her flustered gaze to Natsuo, in hopes of getting some help from his side, but it was to no avail. Natsuo was also all about arguments and word fights when it came to their father so he would never do anything to stop a war from exploding during dinner time.

“You shouldn’t be wasting your time with such useless, frivolous things,” admonished Enji as he picked up his chopsticks once again to resume with his dinner. “Your days off should be used to improve yourself in ways you can’t during school days. Not to frolic around searching for trouble. And that includes the people you associate yourself with. First, it was that intrusive Midoriya brat and now it’s Bakugou? At least you’re stronger than Midoriya, something I can’t say about the other one right now. Learn to pick your friends better.”

“Don’t you think you’re going too far with your controlling, obsessive parenting?” stepped in Natsuo, slamming one of his fists on top of the table. “At least let Shouto have his own friends and decide on his own who he wants in his life. Fortunately, he can pick those, unlike family.”

“Some people sometimes need some help and reminding on what’s best for them, even if they don’t like what they hear,” said Enji, throwing a sideways glance at his other son. “I’m saying what I’m saying out of concern for Shouto’s future. There are plenty of aspiring heroes all over the world. Some are meant to be, some are meant to fail. From what I know, I don’t have a shred of good expectations for those two and I don’t want Shouto to be dragged down by them. Hmph. One breaks his body all over every time he’s needed somewhere, the other forces pro heroes into an early retireme-”

Bam! The loud sound of fists being slammed on the table silenced the entire dining area, save for the sound of the clattering plates.

“Screw you,” hissed Todoroki, his heterochromatic eyes glaring venomous daggers at his father. He got up from his seat and turned his back on the dining table and everyone sitting at it.

“Scre-!?” yelped Enji, voice getting choked up in his throat out of pure shock. When he noticed his son sliding the door open to exit that division, he forced himself to break free from his flabbergasted self and also jumped out of his chair. “Shouto! Where do you think you’re

going!? Get back here!”

“I shouldn’t waste my time with useless, frivolous things, right?” coldly stated Todoroki, sideways glancing at his father with disgust all over his face. He then fully stepped out of the room and slammed the sliding door shut behind himself.

“Way to go, dad,” sarcastically scoffed Natsuo, sourly shoving some of his dinner in his mouth. As his sibling, it went without saying he wanted to spend time with his younger brother and wanted to be with his whole family during the New Year’s celebrations. But Natsuo knew they were all better off spending all holidays away from their home, surrounded by friends and other loved ones.

That’s why neither he nor Fuyumi chased after their youngest sibling that night.

-.-

“Haa~ It’s cold…” sighed Bakugou, a large white cloud slipping out of his mouth with each word he said. He could feel a small shudder starting to creep up his spine so he snuggled his jacket more closely around his body and resumed with his night run.

It wasn’t that Bakugou still had a lot left to do out of his usual self-regulated training regimen that day. If anything, he had already done everything he had to do, and that included schoolwork and packing up his things for a short stay at his parents’ house. Doing any more individual training would be pushing his body towards an overworked state.

Nevertheless, he couldn’t help himself. Bakugou didn’t have anything better to do and the people he usually hung out with at the dorm were

all gone. He didn't quite feel like needlessly tormenting Midoriya and if he stayed cloistered in his bedroom, he'd just be thinking about stuff he didn't want to think about. Especially…

It's not like I'm missing Todoroki already or anything, inwardly grumbled Bakugou, his teeth grinding in annoyance just the slightest as he slowly picked up his pace through his usual running track. *It's just… yeah, that thing! I got used to having him around all the time whenever I'm in the dorm. Yeah, just that. So it's not loneliness I'm feeling right now, it's just a vague feeling that something that used to be there all the time, now isn't. Nothing more, nothing less. …It's just that. …Yeah… I'm totally not running in the middle of the cold, dead night because I'm lonely……*

"I said I'm not fucking lonely, god damnit!!!" roared Bakugou at the top of his lungs. He turned on the turbo on his legs to the max and ran as fast as he could, turning his shadowy surroundings into a blurry black mass with occasional bright spots of light. "I'm not- UWAAAH!"

Without any warning, something bulky and cold came crashing against him sideways and tackled him down on the wet ground.

"The fuck!?" yelped Bakugou, hands immediately grappling the clothes of whoever dared to attack him in the middle of his run. When he lifted the back of his head from the floor and glared at the assailant, his eyes nearly popped out of their sockets. Even with poor lighting, there was no mistaking that half-and-half hairstyle. "Huh? Todoroki?"

"Sorry, I didn't mean to push you down," sighed Todoroki, sluggishly picking himself up from Bakugou's body and sitting down on the floor. He motioned forward one of his hands to also help Bakugou up and, to his surprise, his offer was readily accepted.

"Yeah, you look more like you want to murder me or some shit,"

scoffed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes as he sat up on the floor. That cold, stabbing glint in Todoroki's eyes was something he hadn't seen around in quite a long time - since the sports festival, to be more precise. "What are you doing here at these hours? Aren't you supposed to be with your family?"

"And I was but…" said Todoroki, his gaze dropping down in anguish, fingers clawing at the wet soil underneath him. "I don't want to go back right now. I'll go home in the morning so…"

"Geez, what a pain in the ass…" sighed Bakugou while furiously scratching the back of his head. Something he shouldn't have, as his entire back and hands were covered in mud and bits of wet soil. "Argh, shit! Todoroki, bath, NOW!"

"Eh?" interjected Todoroki, immediately raising his head to accompany Bakugou's standing up motions.

"'Eh?', what!? I ain't gonna let you in my room all sweaty and covered in mud, much less let you sleep in my bed like that!" growled Bakugou, accusingly pointing his index finger at Todoroki, who had likewise gotten all dirty and wet from the tackle. "Dressed the way you are, without a jacket or anything warm on, I doubt you even have your wallet or the keycard to your room with you! So hurry it up, before both of us get sick or something!"

"It's just been a couple of hours since we last saw each other, how come I've missed your yelling voice this much?" softly whispered Todoroki as he got up from the floor. He readily threw himself at his lover and caged his frowning features with both of his muddy hands. Just like that, he passionately kissed Bakugou, lips tightly pressed together as he took his sweet time caressing the hot insides of his mouth with his tongue. When Todoroki finally parted their moist lips after one final gentle peck, both had their cheekbones rosy from the outside cold and the steaming kiss. "Haa… Okay, now I'm ready to hop into the bath."

“I… I’m not…” stammered Bakugou, his heart furiously pumping blood at a million miles per hour. In a matter of seconds, his body was buckling down on the floor once again - his knees had decided to raise the white flag in surrender against Todoroki’s tongue techniques and turned into a pliable sack of goo.

Chapter 68

“Nnn…” With a long, sluggish sigh, Bakugou slowly shuffled his body underneath the bedsheets. He lazily rubbed his sleepy face against the warm log half wrapped around him, half being wrapped around by him - the same messy entanglement of always, occasionally augmented when the two of them fought over who gets to have the koala role for that night.

Bakugou released another soft sigh and closed his eyes a second time, all so he could silently relish on the accumulated warmth of two bodies sleeping together so closely. It was always unknown if it would be him or Todoroki waking up first during their days off, so this small moment of procrastination was something Bakugou only got to savour whenever he was the victorious side of that unofficial competition. Minutes quickly passed by, with his brain still mostly half-asleep. Only then, Bakugou forced himself to open his eyes and lift his head from Todoroki’s chest.

“So the crease is still there, huh…” mumbled Bakugou under his breath as he softly rubbed his eyes while staring at Todoroki’s sleeping features. Usually, his lover retained a serene expressionless demeanour while fast asleep next to him - but that morning, he had this angry frown stuck on his brows. Bakugou didn’t know it was possible to retain grudging expressions while one was asleep but it seemed Todoroki had quite the peculiar facial muscles. It probably had to do with his permanent lack of facial expression. Or maybe his sour relationship with his father had permeated into his body down to a biological level.

Whichever it was, Bakugou hated the sight of that annoying crease on Todoroki’s face.

Bakugou slowly got up from his bed, extremely carefully so that he wouldn’t wake up his sleeping lover. As silent as a ghost, he took a jacket from his wardrobe, grabbed his cell phone and withdrew as fast

as possible to his bedroom's balcony.

"Ugh… Maybe I should have gone to the corridor instead…" grumbled Bakugou, his hand trembling around as he dialled a number on his phone's cold screen. He placed the beeping electronic device close to his ear while snuggling himself more warmly on his jacket. The sun had only just risen so outside in the balcony was still quite dark and extremely cold. A soft clicking sound signalled that his phone call had connected so Bakugou pulled the device slightly further away from his ear.

"Katsuki, do you have any idea what time it is right now!? It's not even 8 AM yet, you jackass!!" angrily roared Mitsuki from the other side of the phone call.

"Yeah, it's early, so pipe the hell down, old hag!!" roared back Bakugou under his breath. He softly clicked his tongue in annoyance and took a peek inside of his bedroom, to make sure that Todoroki was still fast asleep. Their voices didn't seem to have been loud enough to wake him up, thankfully, so Bakugou resumed with the phone call. "It's also cold as heck where I am so I'll just be quick. I won't be going home today after all. And I probably won't be able to go there before New Year's either."

"You're going to spend New Year's at the dorm?" inquired Mitsuki, her voice as surprised as it was disapproving.

"No, I'm going to someone else's house," blurted out Bakugou right away.

"Oh, so you're going to inconvenience your friend's family during New Year's instead rather than your own!?" growled Mitsuki, which forced her son to once again put some distance between his cell phone and his ear. *"Stop being so damn stubborn and get your ass back home*

already! Keep acting like that and your father and I will start thinking you're too ashamed to face us and come back home after being grounded by your teacher for a full month!"

"Shut up! It has nothing to do with that! Why should I be ashamed of a punishment that was blown out of proportion by that sadistic teacher!?" hissed Bakugou, his teeth grinding in frustration. It was only a temporary outburst, however, as he quickly calmed down once again and hushed his angry voice. "And he's not a friend. We've been dating for four months now..."

"Huh?" interjected Mitsuki, her voice nothing more than a flabbergasted yelp.

"That guy has a really shitty relationship with his old man," explained Bakugou after a small sight. He turned his body around and leaned his back on the balcony's railing, his eyes stuck on the mound of bed sheets laid down on his bed. "He has the dorm now so he's using and abusing it to run away from his old man as if he's the plague or some shit. At this rate, they'll just keep avoiding the problem and annoy the heck out of each other whenever they're in the same room. I hate the stupid look he has on his face right now so I'm gonna go raid his house and sort that crap out myself. Though knowing both Todoroki and his father, that will take a while. That's why I won't be going home for New Year's."

"Okay," shortly acknowledged Mitsuki, now that she had time to process the sudden news throughout her son's explanation on the current situation. *"But at least try to show up here for a couple of hours at the beginning of the year. Your father and I are off from work until the 5th so you two can pop up here whenever. Just send a text or something when you're about to arrive."*

"I'll think about it," scoffed Bakugou with a small shrug of his shoulders. After a quick, mumbled 'bye', he ended the phone call and dropped the hand holding the electronic device to the side of his body.

It was only his hand at first but soon enough, Bakugou slowly crouched down on the balcony, his face bright red and burning at a smouldering hot temperature against the biting cold wind. “Shit, now I’m the one having secret conversations about our relationship behind Todoroki’s back… And it just had to be with my old hag, out of everyone I could be sharing stuff about my love life with…”

Bakugou smartly used the frigid temperature outside as a way to cool down but it quickly became far too cold for him, especially when all he was doing was stay there all crouched down, completely motionless with the exception for his swirling thoughts. He returned to the inside of his bedroom, still as silently as it was humanly possible, leaving his jacket forgotten in the middle of the floor as he rushed back to the warm bed.

Step one has been taken care of. Time to move on to step two, schemed Bakugou in the back of his mind, a mischievous smirk on his lips as he hopped into the bed and threw himself on top of his sleeping lover.

“Huh…? What?” babbled Todoroki, utterly confounded by being suddenly jumped by Bakugou while in his sleep. It had been a long, long time since he was woken up so aggressively and the unknown behind it only made his half-asleep brain all the more lost and confused.

“Wakey wakey, Todoroki. It’s time to get up,” said Bakugou with a teasing tone. He snuggly straddled Todoroki’s hips as he slowly leaned his upper body closer and closer to him - it was hard to tell which part of Todoroki he actually wanted up with his suggestive body language, which reached its seductive peak when he gently kissed the corner of his lips and then nuzzled his cheek against Todoroki’s. “There’s a place I want to go with you.”

“Date?” mumbled Todoroki, sluggishly rubbing his sleepy eyes with the back of his hand. The hand that was quickly pushed away from his face by Bakugou and led further south to his lover’s lower back.

“Hm… Not really, it’s something more like our sudden trip to the beach,” explained Bakugou, pressing his body even more tightly against Todoroki. It was extremely easy to get him in the mood when only one-third of his brain was working properly, so Bakugou was going to milk this chance dry. “You remember that beach, right?”

“Yeah,” acknowledged Todoroki, his hands sneaking their way inside Bakugou’s clothes. He thought at first that Bakugou was angry at him for some reason but all of that grinding and chaffing seemed to be for something entirely different. His lover’s upper clothes easily slipped out of his body, denuding his toned torso with it.

“I won the race we had on that beach, didn’t I?” softly purred Bakugou against Todoroki’s ear, his teeth teasingly gnawing on his earlobe. With a small chuckle, he added, “So I was thinking it’s about time I claim my prize. Okay?”

“Sure,” said Todoroki, leaving butterfly kisses on Bakugou’s collar bone as he smoothly proceeded with removing the rest of his clothes. He never would have guessed that Bakugou was going to use that won race for some morning tumbling but he couldn’t bring himself to say that he hated the idea. As soon as he dropped Bakugou’s underwear on the floor, his brain also decided to drop a brief moment of clarity on him amidst his horny thoughts. *Wait a minute… Something’s wrong here.*

“Tell me your home’s address, Todoroki,” requested Bakugou, his hands also creeping underneath the bedsheets so he could tug at his clothes. It went without saying that Todoroki’s face immediately scrunched up into a frown at the mention of his family’s house. No problem. It was all still within his calculations. Bakugou halted completely and faked a pout as he grumbled, “…You’re not going to give me my prize?”

For the first time in forever, Todoroki regretted dating an evil, manipulative, seductive mess of adorable mischief and flawless ploys. Bakugou quickly managed to squeeze his home's address out of him and get the prize he had kept in store for several months - but at least Todoroki got some sugary love to sweeten up his sour mood.

Chapter 69

“S-Shouto… You’re back…” gasped Fuyumi, her eyes going round with surprise the moment she opened the front door and found the least expected two ringing on the doorbell.

“I’ll be intruding on you for a while,” announced Bakugou, leisurely getting inside of the genkan area of the Japanese-style house as if he already owned the place. His hand was tightly gripping the back of Todoroki’s collar as he did so, a hold which he was using as a temporary leash to keep him from escaping once again and forcibly drag him back to his house - getting Todoroki out of the dorm had been one hell of a struggle, Bakugou definitely didn’t want a second reenactment of all of that pain in the ass in the middle of the street or inside a train.

“Ah… S-Sure,” awkwardly acknowledged Fuyumi, still as lost as she initially was when she opened the door. She silently observed as they both took their shoes off and walked deeper into the house, still unable to formulate a lot of words out of shock.

She and Natsuo had concluded the previous night that their youngest brother wouldn’t be returning home any time soon, not after that short but catastrophic argument with their father during dinnertime. He had every right not to, actually, given their abusive connection with one another. So seeing Todoroki come back the next morning, accompanied by one of the argument’s kindlings, was making Fuyumi doubt if she was awake right now or if this was nothing more than a hopeful dream.

Fortunately, perhaps, it was not a dream.

“Is your father home right now?” asked Bakugou after an annoyed groan. He had quite the muscle-bound arms but even he was starting

to get tired of pulling and yanking Todoroki all over the place.

“Eh!? Ah, no, he’s working right now,” answered Fuyumi in a mild panic. Having Bakugou at their house might be bad for her heart - just the thought of what would be their father’s reaction if he were to find out that one of his son’s friendships that he disliked so much was actually a romantic relationship… No, she didn’t even want to think about it. The reaction was unimaginable, it was far too frightening of a sight to be pictured within one’s mind.

“See? What did I tell you, you stubborn mule!?” hissed Bakugou, finally releasing the back of Todoroki’s collar with a yank. He lightly massaged his sore, cold hand with his other one, grumbling to himself under his breath for a couple of seconds more as he did so. Bakugou then gave a gentle kick to Todoroki’s leg, urging him to continue walking with a small jerk of his chin. “Take me to the kitchen. Unlike you, I keep my damn promises.”

“…It’s this way,” mumbled Todoroki after a prolonged stretch of silence. He promptly guided Bakugou to the kitchen, which was already steaming and filled with delicious scents and flavours. “Were you making lunch, Sis?”

“Yes, I was making something quick for Natsuo and me,” said Fuyumi, still following the two latest arrivals around. Or, to be more precise, returning to where she had come from before said arrivals had popped out of nowhere. “I can easily make food for two more if you haven’t had lunch yet, though.”

“Nah, don’t bother,” scoffed Bakugou, dropping the backpack on his shoulder on top of a side table. He unceremoniously removed a small bag of buckwheat flour from his backpack and propped it over his shoulder. “I got our lunch covered already. You mind if I use the kitchen and a few of your ingredients too while you’re cooking?”

“No, go ahead,” acknowledged Fuyumi, politely gesturing towards the kitchen equipment and fridge as if offering them to their unexpected guest. She then immediately turned her eyes away from Bakugou and gawked at her youngest brother, further words getting choked up in her throat as her confusion escalated further and further.

By the time Fuyumi had gathered her bearings and was about to inquire Todoroki on what exactly was going on, the kitchen’s door slid open and interrupted her a second time.

“...Who was at the do- Eh!? Shouto!?” started Natsuo, his voice groggy with sleep, but the moment he saw his younger brother inside of the kitchen, his sleepiness was completely blown away. He switched his flabbergasted gaze from Todoroki to Fuyumi, who also seemed to be just as lost, and then to the person further inside of the kitchen. Once his half-asleep brain finally recognised who that third person was, Natsuo’s eyes nearly jumped out of their sockets. “What? Eh!? Shouto, explain?”

“I was coerced and then dragged back home,” deadpanned Todoroki, not offering much of an explanation albeit being basically begged for one by his sibling’s dumbfounded expressions. He released a small, masked sigh and slowly turned his gaze to Bakugou’s busy-looking back. “I wasn’t planning on coming back here in the next couple of months, not after what that bastard said last night. I only came back because Bakugou made me...”

“Coerced and dragged, you say…” awkwardly laughed Natsuo, his hand slowly climbing up in the air. He leisurely ruffled his dishevelled hair as he tried to make heads or tails of that extremely unusual situation. “So you’ve come back while dad’s working and will return to the dorm once he’s about to come home?”

“No, Bakugou intends to spend New Year’s here. Apparently,” deadpanned Todoroki once again - no, it was more of an apathetic facial expression, a lifeless reaction coming from someone who had

long given up on putting up a fight. Which was precisely how Todoroki currently felt.

Yes, he had caved in to Bakugou's seductive ploy and yes, he had been coerced into telling him his home address. But that didn't mean that Todoroki hadn't retaliated against his lover's evil schemes after the deed was done.

Todoroki did everything within his power to prevent them from reaching his family's house: he refused to leave Bakugou's bedroom but was swiftly kicked out the hard way; he found a dozen of excuses to stay in school grounds - from getting some last-minute practise at the TDL to assigning himself a monumental amount of non-existing homework - but Bakugou cleverly debunked them all; he momentarily baited Midoriya into cooperation but it went without saying that he stood no chance against an extremely angry and vexed Bakugou.

So ultimately, Bakugou just grabbed him by the back of his collar and forcibly dragged him out of the school grounds. Then into a grocery store. Then to the train station. And then at long last, after some lengthy and exasperating attrition warfare, they arrived at the Todoroki Abode.

All because Bakugou, for some unknown reason that Todoroki could not phantom in the least, had decided all on his own that he wanted to celebrate New Year's in the last place any sane person would want to stay at - pro hero Endeavour's house.

"What…!?" yelped Fuyumi and Natsuo at the same time, their hearts sinking down to the pits of their stomachs at the drop of a hat.

"I really didn't have any intentions of coming but…" sighed Todoroki, a small smile slowly shaping up on his lips as he continued gazing at his lover's back. "But if Bakugou is going to be around, it might not be

that bad…"

"No, no, no! It's gonna be plenty of bad!!" promptly stepped in Natsuo, furiously shaking his head in denial. "That was dad's reaction yesterday just by talking about him. I don't want to imagine what will happen when he gets home and-"

"Hey, less chit-chat and more working!" roared Bakugou, slamming the end of a chef knife against the kitchen counter. He then proceeded to threateningly point its sharp blade at the three siblings. "The food's not going to cook itself! The plates and chopsticks aren't going to magically fly on their own to the dining table! Get your asses moving right now, you bunch of slobs, or no lunch for anyone!"

"....." If Fuyumi and Natsuo were already pretty freaked out by that whole home invasion and the war that would erupt once their father arrived from work, now they were utterly gobsmacked with the way Bakugou was talking and treating all of them. They promptly turned their head to their youngest sibling, seeking some answers yet again.

"I told you he's like that all the time," deadpanned Todoroki, only offering a small shrug with his shoulders before he obediently turned around on his heels and went to gather the needed tableware for a lunch for four.

Ehhhhh…? , inwardly interjected Fuyumi and Natsuo, both of them exchanging a hesitant glance with one another.

Albeit reluctantly, Natsuo followed after Todoroki and went to help him set the table. Fuyumi cautiously returned to her cooking, which had been left on hold to attend to the doorbell.

Every now and then, Fuyumi sneaked a glance or two at the student likewise preparing some other dishes a couple of steps away from her. At first, she did it hesitantly, as if fearing that just looking at Bakugou would make him yell at her again. But soon enough, she found herself amazed by his cooking skills, as someone who had been taking care of the entire household since her mother was hospitalised.

“I had heard a little bit about it but you really are a good cook,” commented Fuyumi under her breath, her eyes stuck on the steady and precise knife movements as Bakugou cut the buckwheat dough into soba noodles.

“Huh? Anyone can do this much after months and months of cooking this thing from scratch every single day,” scoffed Bakugou with a dismissive roll of his eyes.

“You’ve also become a fan of soba?” asked Fuyumi, turning her attention back to her own side of the cooking. She wasn’t counting on her blurted comment to receive such a casual response but it sure helped her settle down her nerves.

“Nah, not really,” said Bakugou, carefully dropping the soba noodles in a pot with boiling water to cook them.

“Oh, so it’s only because of Shouto,” noted Fuyumi, softly nodding to herself. There was a sudden clatter due to a knife nearly dropping on the floor but caught midway through against the counter’s side so she turned a questioning arched eyebrow sideways towards her cooking companion. Bakugou was likewise staring at her in surprise, his whole face beet red as he silently opened and closed his mouth like a fish out of water. “Eh? Y-You didn’t know Shouto told us about you two…?”

“To… TODOROKI!!!” roared Bakugou without missing a single beat. Todoroki’s head promptly popped into the kitchen from the corridor,

answering to the furious growl in a matter of seconds as if a summoning spell of some sort. He shoved the knife on top of the kitchen counter and stomped towards Todoroki, who quizzically stared at him with his usual expressionless demeanour. Bakugou vehemently admonished him for what seemed to be the millionth time while yanking his upper body back and forth with a one-handed hold to his clothes. “What have I told you about babbling about stuff to other people? Huh!? I’ve told you time and time again that me not minding others knowing about it doesn’t equal to you openly sharing every single little bit of it to everyone around you, you moron!”

“Right. Sorry,” apologised Todoroki with a not-very-apologetical monotone voice. He was already mentally preparing himself to hear the usual lengthy sermon but, surprisingly, Bakugou quickly released him and returned to the kitchen counter with only a few grumbled, moody barks. Head tilted to the left, he asked, “That’s all?”

“That’s all unless you want overcooked soba noodles for today’s lunch!” hissed Bakugou, throwing Todoroki a warning glare over his shoulder.

“No, I want your perfect soba noodles,” said Todoroki, his body immediately getting as straight as an arrow. He gravitated closer to Bakugou and took a peek inside of the bubbling, steaming pot from behind him. “Is it almost done?”

“Yeah,” grumpily mumbled Bakugou, an intense frown creasing his brows as he closely observed the floating noodles inside of the pot.

“Okay,” acknowledged Todoroki. In a matter of seconds, he gave a quick kiss on Bakugou’s cheek and departed from the kitchen as fast as possible, just so he could avoid being admonished yet again.

“…damned opportunistic asshole…” grumbled Bakugou under his

breath, his cheekbones bordering into a pink blush as he scrubbed the kiss away with the back of his hand.

"Um… Shouto is… ah… He's not very good at this thing called 'delicacy'… Or more like, he's irredeemably dense," said Fuyumi with an apologetical voice. Her youngest brother's denseness probably stemmed from the fact he had been torn away and isolated from most people since a young age so he could be vigorously trained and managed by their father - if there was nobody but a merciless man around you all the time, why be considerate with the words that were voiced out? If it was an unknown situation or thing, why not blurt out the first thing that came to mind or interpret it with the next closest guess? Hence Fuyumi's guilty consciousness about it. She had just watched from the sidelines as her younger brother was brought up with such inhumane training, never able to step in his defence or provide him with some sisterly love. She could now but it definitely didn't make up for all the lost years. That's why she felt the need to come to her brother's rescue whenever his denseness got in the way. "He doesn't mean any harm by it, though. He does it unconsciously, I guess. Shouto… um… told us about you two a while ago. He simply came up to us during the school festival and said 'I'm going out with that classmate that helped you two earlier' as if it was the most natural thing to announce in the middle of a packed classroom. Ahaha, typical Shouto, really… So don't take it to heart when he does or says stuff like that, Bakugou-kun."

"I've gotten used to that crappy trait of his by now…" sighed Bakugou, carefully removing the cooked soba noodles from the boiling water and placing it inside of a bowl with iced water. "It still pisses me off but at least I don't feel like killing him every time he opens his mouth."

Fuyumi only awkwardly laughed at that reply.

Usually, people felt adamant about disclosing to their family their romantic relationships, especially if it was the type that carried a certain stigma to it. Todoroki was, as mentioned before, dense to the point of not understanding why his relationship with Bakugou could

be frowned upon by close-minded people. But Fuyumi had noticed that her younger brother's boyfriend was more on the straight-laced, down-to-earth side, even though he acted and talked like a thug. He knew how and why others could view their relationship in a bad light.

So why was Bakugou so comfortable with having their relationship known by others, to the point he only lightly chided Todoroki for having told his siblings about them behind his back?

The answer was simple and even Fuyumi could see it after just a couple of exchanged words with him - Bakugou could care less about what others had to say or what they thought about them. He was the type that didn't bat an eye about suddenly invading the house of the number 1 pro hero to drag his runaway son back home. The type that said whatever he wanted to say regardless of who he was speaking with.

It's quite shocking at the beginning but… he might not be a bad match to Shouto, inwardly chuckled Fuyumi, a satisfied smile on her lips as she proceeded with her cooking. It wasn't to last, however, as her brain was once again bombarded with worries. *He's not a bad match to Shouto but our father might be a different story...*

Chapter 70

“Thank you for the meal,” said a small chorus of voices, accompanied by the soft clattering of chopsticks being picked up from the table and led towards their corresponding meals.

Up until this point, it had been the same procedure of every meal at the Todoroki residence. But the routine split into the extraordinary the moment the mouth of the youngest resident of that house opened and delightfully slurped up some of his cold soba noodles.

“Delicious,” commented Todoroki in between some chews. His expressionless demeanour was akin to that of someone eating the most expensive menu item of a 3-stars restaurant.

The ‘chef’ of the menu item in question nothing said, only leisurely put a criminally fiery amount of shichimi togarashi in his dipping sauce and waited for the spices to blend in with the dark, savoury liquid.

Fuyumi and Natsuo observed both of them with a certain amazement.

It was the first time they saw their youngest sibling relaxed enough during a meal at home to share his opinion on the food he was eating. Under other circumstances, he’d eat in silence and offer one-word sentences whenever inquired about something. If their father was around, it would be the same but with a perpetual fuming crease on his brows whenever he was within eyesight.

It was also the first time they saw a guest so at ease in their house. Usually, just the knowledge that they were inside of pro hero Endeavor’s estate made people walk around like rusty robots and be in a constant state of tension, whether the big breadwinner was around

or not. But in this guest's case, no one would be the wiser if they said Bakugou had been living under Endeavor's roof since the day he was born.

"Hey, don't just slurp up the soba. Eat the rest of your food too!" admonished Bakugou, accusingly pointing with his chopsticks at the offender's side dishes. Unlike the soba noodles, which had been served cold in the first place, those side dishes were best eaten steamy hot, especially in the middle of Winter.

"Right. I shouldn't let Sis's food go to waste either," acknowledged Todoroki with a small nod of his head. He finished munching the noodles in his mouth and gingerly picked up a piece of simmered kabocha squash. Like he had done with the soba noodles previously, Todoroki chewed the soft chunk with gusto. "Her food is also good, after all."

"I'm glad you like it," said Fuyumi, her chest constricting with an overwhelming wave of happiness. Was this perhaps the first time her youngest brother had straightforwardly praised her food without being inquired about it by someone else first? Fuyumi couldn't tell, she was far too over the moon to accurately recall the past. And even if he hadn't before, she was more than satisfied that all of her previous hard work with house chores and cooking had warranted her this current result.

"Damn, you made these from scratch!?" exclaimed Natsuo, his eyes open wide in surprise as he also tasted a portion of the home-cooked soba noodles. He forced himself to halt his chopsticks long enough to throw a thumbs-up at his younger brother. "Shouto, that's one hell of a nice catch. Bakugou, you cook better than my girlfriend."

"Uh-huh, thanks," acknowledged Bakugou with a dismissive shrug of his shoulders. Todoroki, however, also momentarily halted his eating to retribute the thumbs-up with one of his own. It went without saying that Bakugou smacked the back of his head for that one.

“You’re not going to spend New Year’s with your girlfriend, Natsuo?” asked Todoroki, gently massaging the sore spot on his head while throwing a sideways pouty glance at Bakugou.

“She’ll be with her family until the end of the year but we’re planning to go on our first visit to the shrine together,” said Natsuo after a long sip to his piping hot miso soup. “You think I’m crazy enough to bring her here? I don’t want to doom our relationship so soon… Oh, no offence. I’m sure everything will work out well for you two if you keep a low profile while he’s around.”

“Highly doubtful,” grumbled Todoroki under his breath, his face immediately scrunching up into a deep frown.

“So your old man is the only one in here who doesn’t know yet?” asked Bakugou, an eyebrow slightly arched as he slowly dipped his soba noodles on the spicy variant of the sauce. If Todoroki’s father didn’t know about them dating yet, then what exactly had happened the previous day for Todoroki to rush back to the dorm like that?

“Do you think I talk with him about anything?” deadpanned Todoroki, promptly stuffing some more of his soba in his mouth so he could clean that bitter taste from his mouth.

“Well, that’s just perfect,” said Bakugou, a mischievous smirk slowly curling up the corner of his lips. “Heh… Hehehehehe…”

“Um… Is that also normal, Shouto?” softly whispered Fuyumi, a worried glint on her eyes as she hesitantly looked at the evil, almost demonic in nature, semblance in Bakugou’s face. The small, silent nod she got from her youngest brother didn’t soothe her worries in the least.

In fact, witnessing a small dose of Bakugou's villainous façade only made her even more worried about that year's last couple of days.

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The day continued to go by and night time eventually set itself over that portion of the world, bringing together with it the end of the workday for most citizens.

"Ah. I thought as much," interjected Fuyumi, showing up by the house's main entrance while wiping her wet hands with a towel. "Welcome home, dad."

"Yeah. I'm home," sighed Enji with a grumpy voice. He released yet another sour sigh as he took off his shoes and put on his slippers.

"Um… Dad, there's something I need to tell you…" meekly started Fuyumi, her brain spiralling around as she tried to come up with the best way to break the news to her father. Such a way probably didn't actually exist so she tried to settle with the option that incurred the least damages to everything around them, people and relationships included. "Shouto's back and-"

"Shouto!!" immediately yelled Enji, departing from the entrance area as fast as if he was using his fire Quirk to boost his walking speed. By the television noises that he could hear from the corridor, his son was probably at the dining room already waiting for dinner to be served. He readily slammed the sliding door open and stepped inside of the division. "Shouto, why- …What's the brat who got kidnapped by the League of Villains and then ended All Might's career doing at my house?"

“Geez, the eternal number two pro hero who only reached first place because a brat got kidnapped by the League of Villains and then ended All Might’s career is as much of a jerk as I thought him to be,” scoffed Bakugou with an annoyed roll of his eyes. He tilted his head sideways and looked up at Enji, a knowing smirk plastered on his lips. “Ain’t that right?”

“Pfffft!” Natsuo choked up on the green tea he had been sipping on while they patiently waited for dinner to be all warmed up and served. He coughed a couple of times more, his eyes switching back and forth between his frowning father and the smirking teenage. They already expected their initial meeting to be bad… they just didn’t expect it to be *this* bad.

“Out,” spewed Enji, his glaring eyes tightening even more. He gestured to the open door and the corridor beyond it with his thumb and coldly commanded, “It’s already too late for snotty brats to be out and about. Go home.”

“Don’t wanna,” said Bakugou, leisurely turning his head back to the TV. “I’ll go back to my parent’s house once winter break is about to end. Until then, suck it up.”

“With you around him all the time at the dorm, no wonder Shouto is becoming even more rebellious with me!” loudly yelled Enji, accusingly pointing his index finger at Bakugou’s back. He forced himself to tear his gaze from that infuriating brat and returned his attention to his youngest. “I bet he forced you to bring him home with you, didn’t he, Shouto? This is why I told you to choose your friends better! Next thing you know, you’ll have bums like him trying to mooch off of you and our family! Or worse yet, you’ll end up just like him, a snotty, useless brat that annoys the heck out of everyone around him! For the sake of your brilliant future, he needs out. Now!!”

Calm down, Bakugou Katsuki. It’s not the right time to explode on him yet… Just hold on a little bit more and then fuckin’ slaughter him!,

inwardly growled Bakugou, his teeth grinding in annoyance as he silently heard Enji yapping and yapping right behind him. He took a small, masked deep breath and adjusted his sitting position on the cushion, slowly turning his glaring red eyes back to the pro hero. “Glad to know the feeling is mutual. If the sight of me annoys you that much, then take a hike already! Because I ain’t fuckin’ leaving. Not now, not ever.”

Bakugou loudly slammed the palm of his hand on the table and turned his upper body around some more. Yeah, he definitely wasn’t made to bottle up his anger for too long.

“While this house is his house, it’s also my goddamned house!” declared Bakugou, pointing with his thumb towards Todoroki, who was silently glaring daggers at his father next to him. “Got any more complaints about it? Great! Shove them up your own ass because I don’t wanna listen and I don’t fuckin’ care either! And the day I give a fuck about it is also the day I pack his shit and he never comes back here! You ready to lose your prized heir this soon? I think not! So shut it already, jackass!”

“Bakugou…” mumbled Todoroki, his glaring expression softening considerably after hearing his lover’s words. They reminded him of a distant past where his mother tried her best to protect him from his father’s abusive training regimens. He was no longer subjected to those insane trainings and neither was his father as controlling of him as before but the power he tried to exert over his life choice’s was still very much there, always waiting for an opportunity to nitpick at.

“My son’s house is your house!? What gives you the right to spout such outrageous things!? You’re even more of a shameless, insufferable rascal than I thought you to be!” roared Enji, reaching the peak of his foul mood. “Out! I want you out and away from my son right this moment!”

“I said I’m not gonna leave! Is being a grumpy old fart starting to

affect your hearing or something?" growled back Bakugou, not backing off in the least. "And I ain't gonna break up with Todoroki either! What are you gonna do about it, huh? Call the cops on me? That would give one hell of a headline for tomorrow's newspapers. 'Endeavor calls the police to his own house because he couldn't kick out a hero-in-training on his own'. What a fuckin' loser!"

"My hearing is perfect, thank you very much!" scoffed Enji with a dismissive roll of his eyes. "I just have better things to do than to listen to the selfish yapping of a snotty brat! And I wouldn't need the police to kick you out of my house either, I can do it on my own faster than you can learn some manners! Why don't I teach you a little bit of that right now? If I tell you to leave my house, you grab your things and leave right away! If I tell you to break up with my son, you- ...Wait, break up!?"

"I never said we were just friends," deadpanned Todoroki when his father's flabbergasted eyes slowly, at a snail's pace, switched from Bakugou to him. He promptly scooched his cushion and body closer to Bakugou and declared in all seriousness. "If you kick him out of our house, I'm going with him. And no amount of convincing from anyone, not even from Bakugou, will make me come back."

Todoroki Enji, dubbed Endeavor while on his working hours, spent the next couple of minutes in a dumbfounded daze. When he finally came back to his senses, he was sitting on his usual cushion at the dining table, a plethora of plates and side dishes covering its entirety as every single resident of the house readied themself to eat dinner.

"Wait a damn minute! We're not done talking yet!" roared Enji, angrily slamming his fist on top of the table and nearly toppling down a couple of plates and bowls with the impact. "What do you mean, you're not just friends!? Shouto, are you trying to say that you're dating him? You're dating this snotty brat, is that it? Even as a joke, that's going too far! For as long as it doesn't affect your studies nor your work as a hero, you're allowed to date. But not him! He's the last person a parent would want their son or daughter to date! There's definitely someone better for you out there! This snotty, useless brat is

not that someone! And why are you still here, sitting down at my dining table!? I told you to leave!!"

"You know something? I've been doing my best to ignore every single time you call me a 'snotty brat' and 'useless' because there are more important things to talk about but I've reached my limit!" hissed Bakugou, likewise slamming his fist on the table and, likewise, nearly toppling down the miso soup bowl that had been right next to the impact area. "What do you even know about me to call me useless, huh!? You think everyone is a slob like you, who gets home from work and eats the food that took hours for someone else to prepare!?"

"Slob!? I just worked my ass off the whole day to protect this city from deviants like you!" yelled back Enji, pointing his finger at the current deviant to his peaceful dinnertime. "And with the money I earn with my hard work, I sustain this whole house! Pay all the bills! Put all the food on this table! Yet you dare to call me, the current number 1 pro hero in Japan, a slob!?"

"That's right! A slob! A slob who only knows how to rely on money and status to get shit done!" accused Bakugou, angrily pointing his finger right back at Enji. "I bet that if we strip those two things away from you, you wouldn't last a week on your own! Can't cook, can't clean without your daughter around! Can't show off the 'I'm the number one pro hero' without other people around to hear it! You're the only useless one in this room!"

"Hah, says the one who's currently sponging off of me and my family rather than his parents!" snorted Enji, his lips curling up into a sneer as he looked down on the unwelcome guest. "You need to learn some manners *and* how to respect your elders! Come back and tell me all of that once you learn to cook, clean and earn your own money, *brat* ."

"Oh, I don't know how to cook, is it? Alright then. I don't allow *slobs* to eat my food either!" retorted back Bakugou, a vein nearly popping out on his forehead. He leaned forward over the table and started

sliding the plates in front of Enji away from him. He did so until that portion of the table was completely empty, save for a pair of chopsticks. “There! Have a great time eating the fuckin’ air around you for dinner!”

“What do you think you’re doing!?” roared Enji, this time slamming his two fists on the table, seeing as he had the room to do so.

“You really are going deaf, aren’t you?” snorted Bakugou, mischievously smirking at the absolute victory he had just landed on. He fully got up and smugly gestured to the table - filled with plates and bowls of simmered beef with ginger, ginger pork rolls with eggplant, tonjiru, chestnut rice, green beans shiraae and kombu tsukudani - while declaring, “I was the one who made dinner. And after hearing that one, I don’t feel like allowing anyone who didn’t do shit to eat a single bite out of all of my hard work!”

“Ah… I kept the food warm while we waited for you to get home… and helped with the dishwashing...” said Fuyumi in her own defence when her father turned his shocked, nearly popping out eyes towards her. *Haa… For how long will the arguments continue? This really isn’t good for my heart…*

“I washed the rice,” said Natsuo, proudly pointing with his thumb at his bowl of chestnut rice. He sighed inwardly, *Is it just me or is their argument getting more and more childish as time goes by? Didn’t expect that out of dad…*

“And I peeled the chestnuts,” finished Todoroki with a completely deadpan expression. At this point, Bakugou should just adopt the motto ‘scheme even while cooking dinner’ as his own - was this the real reason why he had roped in everyone at home at the time for the dinner preparations and forced them to do something, anything at all, no matter how small the task was? If so, that was insight abilities on another level. *Oh, so this is why he didn’t make any soba for dinner. Got it. Smart thinking there, Bakugou. He definitely doesn’t deserve to eat our*

soba noodles.

“I’ve been cooking and cleaning around my house since I was old enough to grab a damn knife and hold a freakin’ mop!” declared Bakugou, stomping his foot on the tatami mat while crossing his arms over his chest. “What was the other thing? Oh, earning my own money, right? I’ve been earning my allowance through housework and cooking while my parents were away for work reasons since I was in elementary school! And while they are around? Let’s just say I have a better knowledge of the freaking fashion industry than a seasoned model has! Just a couple of hours of paperwork as a fashion designer’s assistant gets me enough money for a full month of living expenses at the dorm! Heh, at least at my working rhythm it does. If it were someone else, they’d have to work full-time for a full month to get the same amount of work done. Who’s the useless brat now, you *slob* ? Oh, wait. Ten years of working experience at 16 shouldn’t be that special from your perspective, right? I’m sure you’ve been working for much, much longer than that. Do tell me, oh esteemed elder of mine, how old were you when you started earning your own money?”

“Grrrr…” All Enji could retort back to that one was a small vexed growl under his breath.

“Yeah, I thought as much,” sneered Bakugou, fully satisfied with the result of that first bout. Yes, first only because he was certain he’d get into plenty of arguments with this man in the future. He had no intention of ending his relationship with Todoroki so the only thing he could do is learn how to deal with his father like he did with all of the other annoyances in his life. Bakugou sat back down on his cushion and slowly pushed the plates and bowls closer to Enji once again. “Unlike a certain jerk, I don’t want the people living under the same roof as me starving. Oh, but I still hate fuckin’ slobs. So 10,000 yen for each plate and each bowl.”

“Snotty brat…!” venomously spewed Enji, lightly slamming his fist on the table once again before he got up from the table and left the dining room.

“Is it over…? Is this whole thing finally over?” inquired Fuyumi, glancing back and forth between the open sliding door and the remaining table occupants.

“You think dad is going to raise the white flag that easily?” pointed out Natsuo, very sceptical about that abrupt withdrawal from Enji’s side to be equal to an official cease of fire.

“I also doubt it but… I want to eat dinner already,” sighed Todoroki, the dropping of his shoulders coming accompanied by a small growl from his stomach.

“Yeah, this is definitely not over yet,” said Bakugou, his red eyes stuck on the open door. Someone as stubborn and unyielding as Enji definitely wouldn’t throw in the towel this quickly. He was sure to come back and his return could only spell two different outcomes: an easy victory for Bakugou or a harder victory for Bakugou. *So which one will it be, jackass?*

Several minutes passed by and, finally, footsteps could be heard coming from the corridor. Enji was back like they had predicted. Still as moody and grumpy as when he had left the dining area, nevertheless.

“60,000 yen, you snotty brat,” hissed Enji as he slapped a small mound of 10,000 yen bills on top of the dining table. He dropped his body back on his cushion and, after a mumbled ‘thank you for the meal’, he unceremoniously started eating his dinner in total silence. Well, if one was to count occasional groans and annoyed clicks of his tongue as total silence. *If my Shouto hadn’t peeled these chestnuts, I’d be force-feeding that snotty brat all of this, plates, bowls and chopsticks included!!*

Guess who will have a new double bed and double futon next semester? , mischievously giggled Bakugou in the back of his mind as he slid the money closer to him and gently pushed it inside of his pocket. He turned his head to the other side and arched an eyebrow. Both Fuyumi and Natsuo were gawking at him with their mouth hanging wide open. Even Todoroki was slightly surprised, though the emotion didn't translate all that well to his expressionless demeanour. "What? Hurry up and eat or the food will get cold."

"Thanks for the meal," said Todoroki with a monotone, lifeless voice. He really would have preferred it if his father hadn't returned… but he also doubted that he'd get into any further arguments with Bakugou until they were done with their dinner. So eating he did.

This might end up being the hardest New Year's of our lives…, inwardly cringed Fuyumi and Natsuo, also beginning to eat their dinner after releasing a small, tired sigh.

Chapter 71

“Nn… Todoroki,” mumbled Bakugou, his body all but sliding sideways until his shoulder bumped into Todoroki. He sluggishly massaged the bridge of his nose, his cranky red eyes tightening slightly more as he stared at the bright TV screen.

“Feeling sleepy already, huh?” noted Todoroki, his eyes slowly climbing up the wall until he could take a quick peek at the clock there. Sure enough, it was already past Bakugou’s usual bedtime. He gently ruffled Bakugou’s blonde locks and started getting up from his cushion. “Let’s tuck you in then.”

“Oh, do you need help preparing the guest room?” offered Fuyumi, already readying herself to get up from her seat to go help with the room prepping and any other things that would be needed for Bakugou’s temporary stay at their house.

“No, that’s not needed. He can sleep in my room,” denied Todoroki, his lips gently curling up into a small smile. The warm and comfortable welcoming that his siblings were giving to Bakugou was also reaching his heart, making him think that yes, this is what true home was all about.

Yes, Todoroki definitely thought it was the perfect ambience for a perfect New Year’s spent at his family’s house. And everything would have reached a height above perfect if only there wasn’t a certain moody father around to ruin the cosy, homey feeling.

“Don’t even think about it!” roared Enji, slamming his Japanese teacup on the table. A couple of piping hot droplets spilt into his hand but he was far too used to even hotter temperatures to notice the scalding liquid touching his skin. “Not under my roof!”

“You should also go take a nap, it might fix your shitty mood,” sighed Bakugou, stifling a yawn behind his hand as he walked towards the corridor. He sideways glanced at Enji and mischievously sneered, “Pity that it doesn’t fix shitty personalities.”

“Right back at you,” hissed Enji, a vein nearly popping out on his forehead. He gulped down his green tea in one go and also got up from his cushion. “As a well-mannered grown up, I need to make sure that my guests are comfortable in their respective rooms. Even the unwelcome guests. Now, Shouto. Bid your goodnights to this snotty brat, you’ll maybe see him tomorrow again.”

“I’ll stay in the guest room too, then,” deadpanned Todoroki, sticking as close as possible to Bakugou, just in case his father attempted to physically separate them in some way.

“No. You have your own bedroom, use it,” denied Enji right away, gesturing towards one of the corridor’s sides with his index finger. He then placed his other hand on top of Bakugou’s shoulder and gave it a good squeeze. “You’re going to come with me this way.”

“Tsk… I’m too tired to deal with any more of this shit today…” grumbled Bakugou under his breath after an annoyed click of his tongue. He grudgingly turned around on his heels and sourly walked towards the direction he was urged to take.

Todoroki wanted to say something, anything at all, to stop Bakugou from being taken away somewhere else but he found himself rooted in place, his lips slightly parted but unable to utter a single word.

Even if plenty had changed for the better already, it was hard to break some bad habits.

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“Here, you can use this room,” said Enji with a certain irritation as he opened a sliding door. He stepped inside the shadowy room and pointed with his thumb at the wardrobe in one of the walls. “There’s a futon in there. I take it that a household expert can do the rest on his own, right?”

“You should stick around for a little bit longer, then. You might be able to learn a thing or two while the expert does his thing,” scoffed Bakugou in distaste. He threw a sideways disgusted glance at Enji and made a direct beeline to the mentioned wardrobe. Luckily for him, Fuyumi seemed to be very good at taking care of the house so even the usually unused guest room was in a spotless condition. Cleaning was the last thing he wanted to do when he was about to go into sleep deprivation mode. With a small sigh, he removed the futon from the wardrobe and started spreading it on top of the tatami floor. “Let me guess. Todoroki’s bedroom is on the first floor, on the other side of the house.”

“The further away you are from him, the better for him,” spewed Enji as he turned his head the other way and crossed his arms over his chest.

“Seriously, what’s your problem!?” loudly growled Bakugou. That one sure had hit him hard - not because it had been said by a member of his boyfriend’s family but because it was said by that one person Todoroki avoided and tried to keep at a distance at all times on a daily basis. If it had been Fuyumi or Natsuo or even his mother telling Bakugou that, he might have just silently listened to it and then retorted to it in his usual smug way. But such a light response was impossible when it came to his father. “I don’t remember doing anything to you to make you act all pissy at me! Are you holding a grudge because I kicked Todoroki’s ass black and blue during the sports festival? Well, so am I! I fucking hated that stupid match and I can’t wait to have another official go against him so I can finally claim my undisputable first place! Is it that thing about the Kamino incident? Do you think I wanted to be kidnapped by those assholes!?

Do you think I wanted to see that happening to All Might!? Maybe you were hoping for something like that to happen but definitely not me! I ended his career, was it? Then where's my fuckin' thank you, huh? If it wasn't for me, you'd still be the eternal number two, pro hero Endeavor!!"

"Yes, it's all of that! And so what!?" yelled back Enji. "I can see at first glance what kind of person you are! You're the type that does whatever he wants to reach the place he wants to stand at and screw everyone else that gets dragged down because of your actions! You're the type that is going to doom everyone else around you into failure just so you can stand at the top! That's why I don't want my son to be involved with such a dangerous person. Go get kidnapped by villains or go end pro heroes' careers somewhere else!"

"What a thing for a hero to say! No wonder you were never able to surpass All Might, you're nothing but a jackass when placed next to him!" spat Bakugou, his anger levels blowing all of his grogginess and sleepiness away. Never mind sleep, he had a certain man he needed to verbally slaughter for the second time that night. "And no wonder Todoroki doesn't want to have anything to do with you! Who the hell would want to have an asshole with capital A like you as their father!? Shit, rather than try to be the good middleman, I should have gone back to my parents' house and taken him with me!"

"What good middleman?" scoffed Enji with a roll of his eyes. "You just wanted an excuse to worm your way into my house, didn't you? Am I perhaps the next target in your pro hero hit list? You're probably only dating Shouto because he's my son! Congratulations, you managed to get in. Your cover has been blown now, though, so beat it already, you snotty brat!"

"Hey," slowly hissed Bakugou, his raging red eyes tightening some more amidst his dead-serious expression. He walked closer to Enji, not even slightly intimidated by the pro hero's taller and bigger frame as he stopped right in front of him, just a couple of inches of empty air between them. "You can bitch about me all you want. I don't give a fuck about anything you say or whatever shit you think about me.

There're plenty more assholes out there who do the same, why waste my brain cells on them? But I will not allow you to question my relationship with Todoroki. Get the hell out now! I want to sleep!”

Before Enji could say anything else, Bakugou went headstrong on him and pushed forward, until the pro hero had retreated back to the corridor and he could slam the sliding door closed right on his face.

“I didn’t think it was possible to meet someone who annoys me more than the Shitty Nerd…” grumbled Bakugou under his breath, ignoring completely the angry yapping coming from the other side of the door.

At this point, Bakugou was more than ready to blow up with something if that door opened a second time. Unfortunately for his already in position fists, Enji eventually gave up on his infuriating attempts to goad him into another argument and walked away. Not very far, though, Bakugou calculated. The jerk would probably remain around that area of the house to make sure he didn’t sneak out of that room during the middle of the night.

“Tsk… Stupid jerk… Annoying slob… Idiot parent…” Bakugou continued grumbling with a small voice as he angrily adjusted the futon’s position on the floor. “I’m gonna turn your life into a living hell during the few days I stay here, you can count on that…”

“Part of me wants to join you on that plan but I can’t be bothered with it anymore.”

“Huh!? What-” yelped Bakugou, his body startling in surprise just the slightest as he turned around to face the door. Todoroki stood there, his index finger in front of his mouth to request a more quiet overreaction out of him. As such, Bakugou only arched an eyebrow and asked, “Why are you here?”

“You left your bag downstairs,” said Todoroki with a small voice, quietly closing the sliding door behind his back. He walked up to Bakugou and took a seat on top of the futon he had just finished fluffing out. “We have Natsuo and Sis on our side. He’s cooperating with me and making sure dad doesn’t find out I’m out of my room. And Sis will probably try to reason out with him later on. She always does. So let’s sleep, Bakugou.”

“He’s gonna find out and yell at us all over again tomorrow,” pointed out Bakugou, taking his bag from Todoroki’s lap. A mischievous smirk readily popped out on his lips. “And you know what? I don’t care even if he does. That slob of a pro hero can fuck right off for all the flying fucks I give!!”

“No, I’ll go back to my room early in the morning so no more arguments,” deadpanned Todoroki, inwardly releasing a half-exasperated sigh as he observed Bakugou happily scavenging his bag for his sleepwear. A deep crease slowly started forming on his brows as he continued talking while keeping his irked gaze on his undressing lover. “You’ve been paying more attention to that bastard than to me since he got home from work. It’s not worth it to get in constant fights with him. They won’t make him change his mind and they definitely won’t make him any less of a bastard either. So just do like I do and ignore him, Bakugou.”

“Does it look like I’m having fun while arguing with that asshole!?” growled Bakugou, throwing a warning glare at Todoroki once his head popped out from his shirt’s collar. “I ain’t backing off, though. If it’s a fight he wants, it’s a fight he’s gonna get.”

“I knew this was going to happen,” sighed Todoroki with an annoyed roll of his eyes. If he hadn’t managed to convince Bakugou to cancel his sudden plans for New Year’s at his house, he certainly wouldn’t be able to get him out of his house now until he finished what he started. His unwavering drive to move forward and do everything perfectly was something that Todoroki admired in Bakugou most of the time

but, when it came to this situation, it couldn't be called anything else other than pure stubbornness. Bakugou could and should strive for his goals but not if they came at a high cost. "I shouldn't have taken you here…"

"Oh, so you're allowed to go to my house whenever it pleases you but I can't do the same thing?" scoffed Bakugou as he finished putting his pants on. He nudged Todoroki's leg with his foot and gave a jerk with his chin as he gestured towards the futon. "You're all ready for bed too, right? I'm turning the light off so hurry up and lie down."

"Yeah…" softly acknowledged Todoroki, releasing yet another sigh as he adjusted his position on top of the futon and got underneath its covers. The whole room soon became nearly pitch black, with only a gentle white translucent light leaking in from the street through the shoji window. Despite his dejected spirits, Todoroki chuckled just the slightest when Bakugou joined him in the futon and promptly wrapped himself around his left arm and leg. "Have a good night, Bakugou."

"I'd have a better night if I was sleeping in your futon in your bedroom…" grumbled Bakugou, grudgingly tightening his grip around Todoroki's arm. "I'll make do with this for now, though…"

"Sorry," apologised Todoroki with a sigh. He gently caressed Bakugou's spiky hair with his free hand, his fingers slowly getting lost amidst its surprising softness. It wasn't to last, however, as a hand crept up closer to his face and painfully pinched and stretched his cheek. "Owowowow… Hahohou, dat huts…"

"Sorry? Did you just freakin' say 'sorry'!?" quietly hissed Bakugou, his head jumping from Todoroki's chest at the speed of light. "Were you the one saying all of that bullshit? Did you raise that slob into adulthood? I think not! So don't you fucking dare to apologise! I'll kill you if you say that word again!"

“...Yeah… Yeah, you’re right, Bakugou,” started Todoroki with a certain hesitation. But once the weight of his lover’s words fully sunk in, his arms promptly wrapped themselves around Bakugou’s body and he pulled him back to his embrace, nearly squeezing the living lights out of him. “You’re absolutely right. As usual, I guess.”

Todoroki should have known that by now. He should have already known that he and his father were two separate beings, two separate entities whose only connection laid in a portion of his DNA and the time they had shared together.

Other than that, Todoroki Shouto was Todoroki Shouto and Todoroki Enji was Todoroki Enji.

If his father wanted to complain about their relationship or was disapproving of them, it had absolutely nothing to do with Todoroki. It wouldn’t impact how much he cared and loved Bakugou. It wouldn’t influence any of his already made decisions or any future ones. It might be a bit of a roadblock in some ways but weren’t there plenty of them in other places too?

If he allowed Enji’s words and actions to affect him once again and ruin his New Year celebrations with Bakugou and his siblings, wouldn’t that mean that he was returning to his restricted, abusive past rather than move forward to that paradisiacal future he and Bakugou had their sights on?

“Thanks,” sighed Todoroki as a correction to what he had said earlier. Rather than apologise for something he had no control of, he should be thankful that Bakugou was willing to accept all parts of him - including the bad and annoying.

Todoroki could easily feel Bakugou's love during the good, fun times, during their regular day-to-day and during the harsher moments. Wasn't he quite the lucky one?

"Yeah, yeah. Let go before you suffocate me into an early grave…" dismissed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes and a few huffs and puffs. The hold around his body slackened but never departed so all he had to do was to once again comfortably snuggle up against that cosy warmth. With a stifled yawn, he mumbled, "Now sleep... Gotta get our energy restored for tomorrow's battles."

"Yeah. I'm looking forward to one more day spent with you," acknowledged Todoroki with a small nod of his head. It was weird, seeing as he had heard Bakugou whine again and again about his dependence on Todoroki for sleep and had given the whole 'together we are the strongest' pep talk, but maybe it was now his turn to fully internalise all of that. He carefully gave a small peck to the top of Bakugou's head and kept his groggy lover nestled close to his chest.

How many years has it been since I last fell asleep in this house with a smile on my lips…?

Chapter 72

Unbeknownst to them, a raging hurricane was loudly thundering towards them. The tempestuous sounds and stormy breaths didn't breach into their sleeping consciousness until it was right on top of them, furiously glaring with killing intent.

Well, killing intent to only one of the guest room's occupants but that was beside the point. The damages and confusion were the same, regardless of the number of potential victims.

"Shoooooooooooooouto!!" screamed Enji at the top of his lungs, his feet heavily hammering against the wooden floorboards. He opened the sliding door as if he was unsheathing a sword and readily looked downwards towards the futon in the centre of the room.

Enji's sudden, loud wake-up shout startled awake both his son and the annoyance sleeping half on top of him. They both lifted their head at the same time with rushed caution, they both turned their alarmed gazes towards the door at the same time, and they both released an annoyed groan at the same time while slumping back down on the futon - much to Enji's chagrin, if he might add.

"Shouto, how could you let yourself be influenced by that snotty brat and sneak around behind my back like this!?" admonished Enji, his index finger accusingly pointed not at his son, which was this case's true culprit, but at Bakugou. "I told you to sleep in your room, didn't I!? I don't condone this type of mindless disobedience and I condone even less such shameful conduct in my damn house!"

"You call 'sleeping' shameful conduct?" groaned Bakugou with a dismissive roll of his eyes. He slowly pushed his body from the futon and sat up on top of it, all while leisurely stretching his back and arms. "Yeah, I bet you do. You don't seem to be very fond of letting

people fucking sleep around here, the way you were shouting and slamming doors open!"

"You be quiet and get away from Shouto right this moment!" barked back Enji, his raging gaze tightening slightly more as he observed his son slowly getting up.

"What, you scared I'll tarnish his chastity or something?" scoffed Bakugou, with a mischievous smirk immediately finding its way into his lips. "Sorry to break the news to you like this but you're way too late for that stupid 'sex before marriage is bad' bullshit."

"Does something like that even matter if you already made up your mind to marry that person in the future...?" pointed out Todoroki with a groggy voice, one of his hands lazily rubbing his mismatched eyes into more lucid wakefulness.

Having heard that, Bakugou simply switched his gaze from Todoroki to Enji with a 'how do you like them apples now, huh?' look on his smirking features.

Also having heard that, Enji's fatherly heart broke a little bit but he still proceeded forward with vehemently admonishing the two of them for the next hour and a half.

-.-

"Geez, he's been here for less than 24 hours and he's already corrupting my children into delinquency!" fumed Enji, a deep frown on his brows as he comfortably read the newspaper at the dining table. His breakfast was right next to him, constituted of the usual menu items for a traditional Japanese meal, but he didn't touch them in any way or shape. He didn't want to risk indigestion due to eating

his breakfast while royally pissed. “Did he perhaps put something weird in your dinner last time? Because I can’t think of a single reason why you two would so openly side with that snotty brat, Fuyumi, Natsuo. Especially to the point you’re secretly conspiring against me and helping Shouto break the rules that I’ve set!”

“Perhaps it’s because you’re being too unreasonable?” pointed out Natsuo, a small sigh escaping from his lips as he led his chopsticks to his mouth. “They’re dating. They’ve been living in the same dorm for months now. Let them act in the way that’s the most comfortable to them while at home too.”

“And even if they weren’t dating, you should respect their privacy and not barge into their rooms like you did,” sighed Fuyumi too, feeling slightly bad that she couldn’t prevent that loud cacophony from bursting out first thing in the morning. “Right, Shouto?”

Todoroki said nothing, only continued silently chewing his breakfast with a blank expressionless on his face. Sleeping next to Bakugou that night had felt so good and peaceful that he allowed himself to oversleep and stayed in the futon with him rather than accomplish his initial plan of sneaking back to his room before his father found out about his rule-breaking scheme. He agreed with his older sister’s words but he didn’t have any expectations of their father following that advice any time soon. He was simply that stubborn of a man.

“This and that are two different things,” scoffed Enji as he noisily turned the page of the newspaper. “U.A.’s dorm and your teachers might be lax with their disciplining but I’m not. If I tell you to do something, you should listen to me and do it. Within reason, obviously.”

Then Shouto did well in disobeying you, inwardly groaned Fuyumi and Natsuo, both throwing a sympathising glance at their youngest sibling.

“I can’t say if what you’re doing at the dorm is right or wrong since I have no idea what you’re doing, but while in my house, I can and I will, Shouto,” warned Enji, his voice toning down to more serious than angry. “I only haven’t kicked him out of here because he’s holding you hostage with that threat of you leaving together with him. Haven’t your teachers told you how to deal with hostage situations yet? Well, I have plenty of experience with them so that’s that. My decisions are final. You sleep in your room, he sleeps in the guest room. Are we clear?”

“Yes,” grudgingly acknowledged Todoroki, his expressionless demeanour getting some soft sour undertones to it. His father could admonish and yell at them all he wanted but he doubted he and Bakugou would stop sneaking out of their rooms to have some quality sleep together any time soon. It was a habit that was already too ingrained in their daily routine to cut off cold turkey now. Maybe they would be able to make do with a temporary separation if they were at a considerable distance from one another but it was an unreasonable demand if they were this close by.

“While you’re at it, break up with him too,” smoothly added Enji, not a single drop of remorse for putting it in such a cruel, forceful way. “That snotty brat is no good for you. I don’t like him. Find someone better.”

Where did that ‘within reason’ go to?, inwardly groaned Fuyumi and Natsuo yet again, even their hearts constricting inside of their ribcages due to the sheer ridiculousness of those unreasonable instructions. Their pity and sorrow only grew bigger when they saw their youngest brother’s expression cloud into a frown.

“I… won’t break up with Bakugou,” said Todoroki, his hands slowly, carefully lowering his chopsticks to its wooden rest. He had promised himself that he needed to do his best, both for his sake and Bakugou’s sake, so that’s exactly what he was going to do. Even if that meant trying to reason out with his pigheaded father. “It’s okay if you don’t like him. You don’t *need* to like him. Whatever you think of him and our relationship, it won’t change my opinion of him nor how much I

love him and he loves me. He might seem like a bad influence at first but that's a wrong judgement based on surface-level observations. You're making the same mistake the League of Villains did when they deemed Bakugou as a possible member for their group. Yet he's strong enough to turn all of that criticism into fuel for his goals. Since you value strength and status above anything else, shouldn't you be glad that I'm dating the current number one student of U.A.? Not that I'm dating him because of something like that. I love him, he loves me, that's all there is to it. So, yeah, you don't need to like him, dad. You don't even need to accept us. All I want is for you to get used to it because it's not something that will ever change, no matter how many years go by or what others have to say about it. Yeah. That's all."

After that small conclusion line, the entire dining area became as silent as a tumb, except for the soft rustling coming from Todoroki's movements to resume with his breakfast and the atmospheric buzzing of the kerosene heater.

There were a lot of reasons for that silence but the main one was certainly how much Todoroki had talked with their father in one single sitting. Maybe followed by the fact that Todoroki had spoken in a quite reasonable manner rather than immediately flare up into a cold rage.

How is he going to respond to all that?, inwardly wondered Fuyumi, her gaze slowly shifting from her youngest sibling to their father.

"Hmph! I've said what I've said and I won't take any of it back," said Enji after noisily clearing his throat to force himself out of his flabbergasted spell. He whipped the newspaper in the air and closed it, placing it next to his seat while his free hand pulled his breakfast closer to him. He muffled a small sniffle with some miso soup slurping. He needed to mark this day down on a calendar - getting more than 100 words out of his youngest on a single day was an unprecedented event.

“Fine by me. I’ve also said everything I wanted to say,” acknowledged Todoroki with a small shrug of his shoulders.

Fuyumi and Natsuo sighed in relief, perhaps a little bit too loudly for it to warrant them pointed, inquisitive glances from both Todoroki and Enji. But it seemed they weren’t going to have more mealtime spent in constant, back-and-forth, petty arguments so hey, weird glances were more than welcome.

That was the conclusion they would have desired to reach but the fact Bakugou was currently missing from the dining room left them with a teensy-weensy amount of suspicion over the ongoing peacefulness around them. Was it something that would last throughout the final days of the year? Would they return to warring time as soon as Bakugou was in the same division as Enji?

They would eventually find out, one way or another.

“Hey, Todoroki!!” came Bakugou’s voice from the corridor, accompanied by some light footsteps. Soon enough, he was peeking inside of the dining room, the usual small frown present on his brows.

“Yeah?” “Yes?” “Hm?” “What now?”

Bakugou’s calling was answered by four different fronts, comically in synchrony with one another to possibly form the weirdest response he had ever gotten to date.

“Argh! Fuck my life…” groaned Bakugou under his breath. He released a tired sigh and tapped his thumb on his chest. “I meant *my* Todoroki.”

“Bakugou,” said Todoroki, his face promptly lighting up into a sparkly, blissful expressionless demeanour that screamed of ‘I just won the best jackpot ever’ to everyone that noticed it. “You can just use my first name while we’re staying here. Or all the time. I don’t mind.”

“Eww, no, that’s disgusting,” cut off Bakugou right away, his frowning features scrunching up some more in slight repugnance. He gave a small jerk with his chin and gestured towards the corridor before he turned around on his heels and walked away. “Just hurry up and come, will you?”

“Heh… Love, huh?” snorted Enji, sideways glancing at his flabbergasted, utterly floored and devastated son.

Enji would also need to take a pointer on how every single one of Bakugou’s actions and words could either put a smile on his son’s face or make him fall into a flunk but that one was only going to be a tiny, small, nearly invisible side note.

Just for future reference. Nothing else.

Chapter 73

“Thanks for all of your hard work throughout this year, Endeavor.”

Just the sound of that voice, let alone the words that were being thrown at him, made Enji’s eyebrow twitch in annoyance. It was a nearly instinctive reaction coming from him when he turned around to face the skin-and-bones body of the former number 1 hero and his features scrunched up into a menacing frown.

“I suppose the same can be partially said to you too,” scoffed Enji with a moody shrug of his shoulders. “Any further thoughts on what was your last end of the year hero meeting as an active participant?”

“Japan has been left in extremely good, capable hands. I trust that you and the other billboard heroes, together with all the other pro heroes spread throughout the country and all of your respective sidekicks, will be able to guide everyone to safety for many more years to come,” said All Might with a rueful smile. “My gut instinct also tells me that the future pro heroes making their debuts in the next couple of years will also take a big part in it. They’ll be able to receive our torches and make them glow even brighter against any incoming darkness, I’m certain. Thanks to that, I’m kind of looking forward to my retirement years, ahahaha.”

“Hmph! Obviously! I intend to fix all the mess you caused with your sudden retirement, that I can guarantee you,” smugly announced Enji, his index finger pointing accusingly at the former Symbol of Peace. “And it goes without saying that the incoming pro heroes will be just as good as the current ones. Shouto is amidst them, after all. He alone will easily make up for all the 3rd rate ones around here.”

“Y-Yes, I suppose so,” awkwardly acknowledged All Might. He inwardly sighed, too. *He’s still the same overbearing idiot parent of*

always…

“How is Shouto doing at school?” asked Enji, his voice much calmer and softer now as he crossed his arms over his chest and turned his gaze to the corridor’s wall rather than All Might’s skinny mug.

He’s still the same overbearing idiot parent of always but much more mellow and lenient now, inwardly chuckled All Might. He softly cleared his throat, just in case a smile slipped out into his lips and was misunderstood as a taunt by the volatile pro hero, and then started. “Young Todoroki is the same honour student he has been right from the start. He passed this semester’s written final exams with flying colour and the practical exams were also a cinch for him. He grows leaps and bounds with every challenge we, the teachers, present to him and his classmates. He still has some areas in which he needs to improve but he’s certainly on the right path to becoming as great of a pro hero as you are, Endeavor.”

“Of course he is!” declared Enji, proudly sticking his chest out as he gave a sharp nod with his flaming head. He quickly toned down once again and, after long minutes of deep silence and increasingly frowning features, he unwillingly mumbled. “……What about the annoying snotty brat?”

“‘A-Annoying snotty brat’…?” repeated All Might, a lost expression on his face as he stared at Enji with his eyes wide open. Was he perhaps referring to his secretly main protegée, Midoriya Izuku, who had caught so much flak from him in the past already?

“You know very well who I’m talking about!!” growled Enji, the beard-shaped flames on his face quivering in anger. “It’s that Bakugou kid! How bad is he faring and how much below is he now when compared to my Shouto!?”

Oh. Ohhhhh…!, interjected All Might in the back of his head. Though it was surprising to hear pro hero Endeavor asking about anyone other than his prodigal son, if one was to think more closely about it, it wasn't such a far sketched and unusual occurrence. After all, Todoroki's relationship with Bakugou had become the most well-known secret within U.A. High School since the school festival. It was very likely that those whispering comments and enthusiastic voices had somehow reached Enji's ears. *Is he trying to investigate and evaluate Young Bakugou because of that? Can't blame him there, only those who personally know him are aware of how much of a good lad he is. Well, if we put aside all of the verbal abuse, iron fist against everyone that rubs him the wrong way and unredeemable superiority complex, that is…*

"Young Bakugou is also doing great so far," started All Might with a certain awkwardness, his bony hands and arms moving around in the air left and right as he narrated his opinion on the matter. "He aced the written exams, as expected, and he usually fares really well during the practical exercises too. He might have a rough personality but he's a textbook honour student, deep down. He's someone who puts a lot of emphasis on training and self-development outside class hours and that shows during the exams and practical exercises. He has a natural talent to use his Quirk and the brains to figure out the best course of action at all times. For all the faults he might have personality-wise, he's one of the most promising heroes-in-training currently attending U.A."

"Between my Shouto and that brat, who do you think is the best?" inquired Enji, his stern, glaring gaze tightening even further. "They had that catastrophic match during the sports festival but my son can't be inferior to that snotty brat! I refuse to believe he is!"

"As a teacher, I can't judge my students based on who's superior and who's inferior…" confessed All Might with growing hesitation. A sudden event soon popped out on his brain, however, and he hurriedly put his hand inside of his pocket to fish around for his cellphone. "Hold on, I think that one is still archived in the teachers' forum. It was an amazing and extremely educational fight so I doubt Aizawa-kun will be taking it down any time soon but… Oh! Yes, it's still here."

Enji's glaring features became slightly more suspicious as he slowly approached All Might and glanced down to the screen of the cell phone being motioned towards him.

"This recording is from a practical exercise we did a couple of months ago, before the school festival. The objective was for the students to work on their current weaknesses as pro heroes and since they both had similar problems at the time, we decided to pair them up for that exercise," explained All Might after he pressed the play button and got the surveillance camera-recorded video screening. Enji just silently stood next to him, his fiery gaze stuck on the phone's screen. "As pro heroes, we have this urge and tendency to find sidekicks who can match up to our pace or who compensate for what we lack, right? Both of their Quirks are strong as it is so there isn't much of a need to compensate when it comes to strength and output. They're also both smart so they can easily think up strategies on the spot if they ever find themselves in a pinch. So when Aizawa-kun and I teamed them up together for this exercise, we thought they would individually complete the requirements of no damages, as per usual. It was a very pleasant surprise to discover that rather than compensate for what each one of them lacks, their Quirks get an exponential boost when mashed together. Turns out that nitroglycerin is a good match for both fire and ice. They're powerful on their own but together? They'd be an unbeatable team, that's for sure. At this point, I think everyone at U.A. agrees that they go quite well together, both teachers and students alike."

Despite All Might's incessant flustered babble, Enji watched the entirety of the practical exercise in deep silence. The video quality wasn't that great, due to all of the smoke and abrupt changes of temperature on the battlefield, but everything that needed to be seen was more than visible. His son's perfect performance while teaming up with the current biggest thorn in his life was so clear that even a blind person would be able to see it.

"Tsk! Go quite well together, my ass…" grumbled Enji under his breath after an annoyed click of his tongue. With that said, he

abruptly turned around on his heels and continued walking down the corridor like he previously was before All Might got in his way.

"Eh? E-Endeavor? Eh?" yelped All Might, indecisive over if he should end the conversation just like that or if it was to everyone's best interests if he chased after him. He ultimately decided on the former as he and Endeavor have never been close enough for that kind of casual, calming talking. *Did I perhaps say something that I shouldn't? Oh boy, I hope this doesn't cause any trouble to both Young Todoroki and Young Bakugou…*

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Enji was almost done with removing his shoes and putting on his slippers when Fuyumi appeared in the entrance area to welcome him home.

"How was work today?" asked Fuyumi, a smile on her face as she greeted her father. She made way for Enji to pass by as they both walked deeper inside of the house. "Dinner should take 15 more minutes to get ready."

"I still have things to do at the office so I won't be staying here for that long," curtly said Enji, the creases on his brows becoming deeper as he walked down the corridor. "I just came to get some things out of my mind because we officially begin the New Year's surveillance operation alongside other hero agencies. Where's Shouto?"

"Ah… He and Bakugou-kun finished setting up the kotatsu a couple of hours ago so that's where they are…" answered Fuyumi with a tinge of hesitation. Inwardly, she already sighed and sobbed at their bad luck. *Here comes the 2nd round of arguing of the day, I suppose…*

Her father didn't say much after Fuyumi told him their location and what they had been up to lately, he just continued to walk forward. She didn't know if it was better to let their father to his own devices and return to the kitchen or if she should follow after him and mediate whatever explosive argument was about to drop down on them.

Fuyumi believed that a burnt dinner was the lesser of two evils so she silently, meekly followed after Enji while maintaining a considerable distance between them.

For once, Fuyumi's fears didn't come to fruition right away. Enji wasn't shouting his youngest son's name at the top of his lungs as he approached the division of the house in question. Rather than step into the room with a ballistic fury, he momentarily stopped and closely observed the situation inside. It almost seemed as if he was in a recon mission and was now putting his brain's gears into motion to come up with the most optimal attacking strategy.

Since Enji was being unusually quiet that evening, neither Todoroki nor Bakugou noticed his presence right next to the open sliding door and proceeded with their leisure TV watching moment - Todoroki was comfortably snuggled against Bakugou's back to add to the kotatsu's warmth while Bakugou did the detailed work of peeling some mandarins and occasionally fed them to either himself or Todoroki. They were so absorbed in their own little, cosy world that they had probably forgotten that it was nearly dinnertime.

Fuyumi anxiously waited on the sidelines for something to happen. When the most frequent reaction was a cacophony of yells and hisses, this peaceful silence was scarier than the loudest of roars. She could feel her heart slowly speeding up with each second that passed by and nothing happened.

Hence, she was so very glad when her father finally made his move - regardless of whether it wound up being a good one or a bad one.

“Shouto!” called Enji, immediately rousing the attention of the room’s occupants and urging them to turn their heads in his direction. He pointed his index finger at them and quickly switched between pointing at one and then at the other. “Have you two broken up already?”

“What do you think?” deadpanned Todoroki with the most lifeless voice a living being could create. His father truly never tired of harping on the same string, did he? With a small sigh, he turned his head back to the TV once again while he gently tightened his arms around Bakugou’s stomach area.

“Good,” dropped Enji out of the blue, his judgemental hand and its index finger withdrawing closer to his body once again.

“Huh?” interjected both Todoroki and Bakugou at the same time, the former immediately turning his confused gaze back to his father and the latter halting his hand halfway with popping another piece of mandarin in his mouth.

“I’m going to milk every little bit of talent and worth you have once you two go pro and use it as a stepping stone to make Shouto rise in the charts faster than ever seen before,” declared Enji, a smug smirk tugging the corner of his lips upwards. “Get ready for a lifetime of me butting in everything you two do, Bakugou. On a side note, though, you should be thankful to have an experienced pro hero like me, someone who will dominate the number 1 spot for countless years, micromanaging the heck out of you. Or would that be too much of a challenge for a snotty brat like you? Ready to throw in the towel now? The door is right over there, then.”

“Heh! Bring it on, asshole!!” snorted Bakugou, quickly throwing the piece of mandarin to his mouth so he could free his hand and flip the bird at Enji. “I’ll only ever march at the beat of my own drum and like

hell I'm gonna let you butt in anything we do. Micromanaging others is one of my fields of expertise so back off. The faster you realise that, the better for your ageing hairline!"

"We shall see," scoffed Enji with a dismissive roll of his eyes. There, the little seedling that had been left germinating in his brain throughout the whole day had been plucked out now. Enji turned his back on them and followed the exact same path he had taken there. "Fuyumi! Due to the current New Year's surveillance operation, I won't be home until January 1st. Even though I'm called a slob by a certain ***snotty brat*** , I take my job seriously and can't afford to get needlessly distracted by trivial things back at home. Make sure you look after the house as usual and keep an extra careful eye out on the ***snotty brat*** while I'm gone."

"I call you a ***slob*** because that's exactly what you are while at home so just fuck off already and get back to work, you damned ***slob*** !!" loudly screeched Bakugou from inside the room. "Fucking hell, you piss me off so much with that stupid 'snotty brat' bullshit! AAAAARGH!!! Hands off, Todoroki! Let me go beat some sense into that bastard's brain! Ack…! Todoroki, wait…! You're nearly pushing my inwards out! Y-You're squeezing me too damn much…!! Ugh... DAMN IT, CAN'T EITHER FATHER OR SON EVER CHILL THE FUCK OUT WHILE AT HOME!?!?!?"

"If there's anything for dinner already done and that I can eat while on my way back to the office, get it ready for me," instructed Enji, turning a deaf ear to the mayhem coming from that division. "If not, I'll just have one of my sidekicks run some errands for me later."

"I can… make some onigiris… within a couple of minutes..." babbled Fuyumi, her brain still too boggled for a smoother speaking pattern.

Did Todoroki Enji just accept and acknowledge Todoroki Shouto's relationship with Bakugou Katsuki?

That conversation led Fuyumi to think that yes, her father had just given them a very sulky, very menacing ‘okay’.

Chapter 74

“Can you hurry up and wipe that stupid grin from your dumb face?” grumbled Bakugou, one of his eyebrows twitching in annoyance. He shuffled his body slightly underneath the kotatsu and removed his arms from its warmness so he could sulkily slam his elbows on the table. “It’s starting to get on my nerves…”

“You can’t even see my face from this position,” pointed out Todoroki with a small tilt of his head. Bakugou managed to lift one of his elbows from the kotatsu and strike him with it in the gut faster than he could blink. “Ugh…!”

“I can feel it and that’s all it takes for me to get irked at your stupid mug!!” growled Bakugou, pushing his elbow against Todoroki’s stomach area a few more times.

“I… don’t understand what is it about my face that’s annoying you but is it a bad thing?” inquired Todoroki as he gently rubbed and massaged the sore spot on his torso. He kept glancing at the back of Bakugou’s head as he patiently waited for an answer but his sudden silence seemed to be hinting at a definite ‘no’. Todoroki rolled his eyes around in a masked way and leaned his chin over Bakugou’s shoulder. “Are you disappointed that you didn’t get to struggle and argue against my father for very long?”

“Shut up…” sourly grumbled Bakugou under his breath, once again hitting Todoroki’s gut with his elbow. This time, however, it had been nothing more than a soft tap.

“I wasn’t expecting him to say that either,” confessed Todoroki with a small sigh. “He’s not the type that changes his mind easily, especially about things he doesn’t like. I thought he was going to continue picking fights with you for the rest of his life while coming up with

ways to try to force us to break up. So seeing him come back home while he's busy with work just so he could tell us all of that… kind of made me want to reevaluate my opinion of him. Getting his approval made me happier than I thought it would..."

"My job here is done, then," said Bakugou with a dismissive shrug of his shoulders. A small laugh escaped from his throat when Todoroki's arms around his waist tightened on reflex. Hence, he decided to teasingly place his hand on top of one of Todoroki's and slowly, playfully try to pry his fingers away from his body. "What, you think I'm gonna leave in the middle of the night now that I've successfully finished my mission? I don't count my chickens before my eggs hatch, okay? I bet that if I left right now, you'd go back to be at each others' throats in a matter of days. That would be way too much of a pain in the ass so it's mission completed for now only. The war is far from being won."

"Have I ever told you how much I love your scheming mind?" deadpanned Todoroki, hugging Bakugou's torso even more strongly and closely as his heart sweetly squeezed all on its own inside of his chest.

"Yeah, yeah. You've told me that plenty of times already," scoffed Bakugou, a small smile forming on his lips when Todoroki gave him a loving kiss on the side of his neck. That word was one of those annoying things he would never grow tired of, even if it was crazy embarrassing to hear it or to say it. "I did want to argue and banter with him some more. Maybe even milk a few more yens out of him as payback for what he said earlier. It would be the perfect financing source for future trips and dates, and a great way to annoy the shit out of him afterwards, hehehe…"

"No one's going to stop you from still doing that," pointed out Todoroki, stifling an amused chuckle against his lover's warm skin. "Next year, I want to go to all sorts of places with you and try all sorts of things with you."

“You’re jumping the gun a bit there, no? You think we’ll have the same amount of free time we had this year?” noted Bakugou, leaning his body back so he could lift his head some more and peek at Todoroki from the side. “The internships will soon start once again and every little bit of free time we have to go on trips and dates will go down the drain.”

“Don’t mention future trips and dates if you’re just going to crush my expectations a few seconds later, Bakugou…” groaned Todoroki, his shoulders slumping down in utter dismay. He knew Bakugou was right, though.

Unfortunately, they didn’t live in a world filled with unicorns and rainbows but one where they had to abdicate of their youth and pour all of their time, energy and sweat into a faraway future. It was a harsh life for a teenager but still a worthwhile investment nevertheless. All of their current sacrifices would pave the path that turned all of their dreams and ambitions into reality.

“Since our time is gonna go down the drain, we need to make sure we make the best out of every single trip and date, no matter how short they might be,” added Bakugou, smugly smirking at his lover while lovingly pinching his nose. “Right, Todoroki?”

“Nngh!” softly yelped Todoroki due to the sudden nose pinch. Despite his nasal voice and stiff head position, Todoroki deadpanned, ”I doubt any of our classmates is willing to continue sacrificing their plans and days off for us to have a successful date so you need to come up with a new counter strategy for our bad luck. How about we have one of them decide our plans for us?”

“Fuck no! I’d rather have no dates then!” growled Bakugou, squeezing his pinching fingers slightly more before he yanked his hand away. He released a small, masked sigh and sat back against Todoroki’s chest once again. “We’ll think about that when the time comes. Why stress over what’s to come when we could and should be making the best

out of our *now* ?"

"You want to go on a date right now?" inquired Todoroki, an eyebrow slightly arched as he lifted his gaze to the clock on the wall. "A bit too late to go out now, isn't it? It's just a matter of time before you start getting all drowsy and cranky from sleep."

"I can give you the cranky now rather than wait for the drowsiness," grumbled Bakugou, this time aiming for a pinch on one of Todoroki's lower arms. "I didn't mean we should go out on a date right now, you moron. We've been rooted to the kotatsu for hours now! The TV is starting to bore me to death with their repetitive news and New Year's programmes! There's plenty of other stuff we can do at home!!"

"Then do you want to come to my room?" suggested Todoroki as he leaned his chin over Bakugou's shoulder once again and peeked at him with a beckoning glint in his eyes. "My father won't be around for the next couple of days so we should use the chance to do everything we can't while he's around."

"Heh! Which 'everything' is that 'everything' supposed to be?" asked back Bakugou, mockingly tilting his head to the right while mischievously smirking. "I might be bored out of my mind right now but I'm far from sleepy. If that 'everything' is just going to bed early, then you can go ahead first. I'll sneak into your futon and jump you in a couple of hours."

"Jump me now and we'll have an extra couple of hours," chuckled Todoroki, head leaning forward for a quick kiss. That's all he had in mind for the time being. Bakugou seemed to have a different opinion because a sweet-scented hand was promptly slapped straight on his face to cut his initiative off.

"Just because that annoying slob isn't around, it doesn't mean others

aren't," hissed Bakugou, tightly gripping Todoroki's head with a one-hand hold. He menacingly warned, "Keep the smooching and groping to a bare minimum until we get to your room, you pervert."

"But we're alone right-" pointed out Todoroki but Bakugou wasn't having any of it, the way his grip to his head became even tighter and painful.

"I don't care if we're alone or not. It feels weird here!" growled Bakugou, yanking his hand out of Todoroki's head as soon as he was satisfied with the little squeeze he had given to his silly brain. He tapped Todoroki's arm a couple of times with the same hand and urged him, "Hurry up and let go or we won't be going anywhere or doing anything."

"You can be surprisingly shy at times," said Todoroki, a small smile curling up the corner of his lips as he slowly pushed his body away from Bakugou's back and out of the warm kotatsu.

"Shut up… Got a problem with it…?" grumbled Bakugou under his breath, going through the same motions as Todoroki so he could also get up and get going. Even though he vehemently warned Todoroki not to, a small peck still found its way into his lips.

"I don't have a problem with it per se but since it's so cute, I end up wanting to tease you a little bit," confessed Todoroki, his smile softly, lovingly stretching a little bit more. It went without saying that Bakugou's cheeks bloomed into an endearing shade of pink, his pouty lips flapping open and closed as another hissy fit attempted to break free. Todoroki would do well to make haste, then, for there was no stopping his lover's admonishments. He could delay them, however, so that was the strategy he was currently aiming for. Todoroki grabbed Bakugou's hand and entwined their fingers snuggly, smoothly guiding him out of that division and into his bedroom through it. Once inside, he turned around to close the sliding door but ended up focusing solemnly on Bakugou, who was still blushing harder than

crimson. “What’s the matter? I haven’t done anything yet.”

“I-I know you haven’t so just shut the fuck up and do something already, you stupid moron…!!” hissed Bakugou, his cheekbones only growing redder and puffier. He softly clicked his tongue and briefly averted Todoroki’s confused gaze out of embarrassment. “Shit… If you had done something more than a little kiss or say those dumb flirtatious words by now, I’d have a good freakin’ excuse to be this lame…”

“It’s not ‘lame’, it’s ‘cute’,” corrected Todoroki, promptly diving into ‘something more’ by greedily feasting on Bakugou’s pouty lips. He closed the sliding door in a rush and with bodies pressed tightly together, tongues entwined with voracious want, they unsteadily walked deeper into the room and towards the corner where the futon had been neatly folded. Todoroki gently caressed Bakugou’s heated cheek as he slowly parted their moist lips. “No matter how many times I tell you you’re cute, you still won’t believe me, will you?”

“And no matter how many times I tell you to shut up, you still won’t, will you?” snorted Bakugou with a small roll of his eyes. With a quick push on his shoulders, Todoroki fell over the folded futon and Bakugou smartly used the opportunity to get the pace to change into his favour. He likewise dropped his body on top of Todoroki, his hips snuggly straddling his lover’s, while he removed his upper clothes with teasingly slow movements. Bakugou’s lips were twisted in a mischievous smirk as he purred, “You’re burning all of our extra hours with that stupid flirtatious shit of yours. If you don’t make a move fast, I will.”

“You’ve been cutting me off every time I try to make a move, Bakugou,” deadpanned Todoroki, his eyes stuck on Bakugou’s smug expression to try to figure out whatever scheme his brain had formulated this time to get back at him. Well, if that was how Bakugou wanted to play at, he’d leave him alone to his own devices - Todoroki would do the same too. He hooked one of his arms around Bakugou’s waist and tugged him closer to his body, easily rolling them against the futon and the tatami floor afterwards to revert their

positions. His lips and teeth placed light kisses and nibbles down the length of Bakugou's neck while his hands occupied themself with removing his pants.

"Are you done with the warming up and finally up for it?" amusingly asked Bakugou as he, once again, slowly rolled Todoroki's shirt over his torso and urged him to lift his arms with a small jerk of his chin. Todoroki was cooperating with his undressing process so Bakugou retributed in the same way and lifted his hips from the floor to have his pants slip down his legs.

"There's still a lot of warming up to be done. We left everything at the dorm, right?" pointed out Todoroki with a small sigh. They yet again found themselves in a situation where they were raring to go but had neither lube nor condoms at hand. Todoroki could easily see himself being hit by a fist or a kick if he tried to stretch Bakugou's tight entrance with his mouth and tongue once again so that method was off the table as a first choice. He didn't have any hand creams or lotions in his bedroom and even if he had, he didn't know if they could be safely used in those areas of the human body so that option was also low on his list. That only left them with… Todoroki cupped Bakugou's face with his hand and slowly caressed his lower lip with his thumb. "Lend me your mouth for a little bit, Bakugou."

"For fuck's sake, can't you phrase it differently…?" groaned Bakugou, his cheekbones readily combusting into a blush. By the look on Todoroki's face, Bakugou knew he hadn't meant that in the way most would have interpreted it - in the way Bakugou himself had interpreted it for a fraction of a second and had made him blush like a tomato - but seriously, his dense tree needed to unlearn whatever made him blurt out embarrassing lines like that one as soon as possible. As usual, his admonishment swooshed past Todoroki and only made him tilt his head in confusion. Bakugou released another exasperated sigh and used that chance to keep his lips parted and slowly take Todoroki's fingers in his mouth.

"Oh. Don't worry, my hands are cleaned so you can lick and suck on my fingers as much as you want," suddenly added Todoroki, almost as

if the thought had suddenly popped into his head while he used his free hand to tug at the hem of Bakugou's underwear and pull it slightly down. Perhaps he shouldn't have said that because his fingers were promptly bitten and two glaring red eyes pinpointed his pained winching features with murderous intent. "Ouch…!"

"Aill hill yuu…!" growled Bakugou, his mouth too filled with a pair of fingers for a normal vocalisation of anger. The message still seemed to have come across because Todoroki mumbled a small 'sorry'. Bakugou was still fuming a little bit but he nevertheless continued licking his fingers, covering and coating them with as much of his saliva as he could. He certainly wasn't counting on such a simple act to be so arousing: the way Todoroki's fingers lightly bumped on the roof of his mouth and slipped and slid against his tongue made his spine feel all sorts of tingly and ticklish. "Haa… Ngh… Hohorohi…"

If you act like this, how do you expect me not to call you cute or adorable?, inwardly sighed Todoroki, his heart skipping a couple of beats at that sight. The skipped heartbeats didn't interfere much with the wave of arousal that that very same sight made wash over him all the way to his groin. With Bakugou, he truly had the best of the two worlds. Todoroki slowly slid his fingers out of his lover's mouth, which erotically gave chase to them until the conscious overruled the unconscious and forced Bakugou to halt mid-motion and quickly slam his lips shut. *No, how do you expect me not to call you cute or hold myself back?*

"I'm putting them in. Tell me if it hurts, okay?" said Todoroki after gulping down hard and shoving his lust likewise down with it. He slipped his hand inside Bakugou's underwear and gently pushed his fingers inside of the narrow entrance.

"I'm way too used to this by now for it to hurt," snorted Bakugou with a small roll of his eyes. That intrusion on his lower half had made him feel fidgety and apprehensive at first, but now he could easily relax at the sensation of Todoroki's fingers or other body parts inside him. Not that it didn't feel uncomfortable anymore or that it was an instantaneous sort of pleasure for him; with every sexual encounter

they shared, Todoroki had slowly gained his unwavering trust and made him believe that if it's him, he could leave his body in his hands without having the sweat too much over the matter. That was as far as he was willing to surrender to him, though. "Ngh… But if you're that worried about it, why don't you make sure I feel even better in other places?"

Todoroki only softly chuckled at it and went along with Bakugou's taunting instructions. He promptly joined their lips together in another heated tongue entanglement, all while pulling his underwear further down his thighs. Even Todoroki was a little bit reluctant to tear his mouth away from his lover's but he braced himself for the momentary break and continued to feast down his chin and neck and chest, where two perky nipples anxiously awaited for some attention. He gave one of the nipples a quick lick and suckle and then moved past that zone, his tongue intended in caressing a different area that night.

"Ngh… Haa… Hah…!?" Soft gasps escaped from Bakugou's parted lips now and then, in tandem with Todoroki's caresses and the fingers slowly slipping out of his insides, but a surprised yelp suddenly burst out of him when one of his legs was tugged upwards without any warning. Bakugou glanced down just in time to witness Todoroki leaning his body even further and engulfing his cock with his mouth. His body shuddered from head to toes at the wet warmth around his hard member, back arching slightly over the folded futon as Todoroki's fingers penetrated his hole once again, now with the added saliva and precum dribbling down his length. "Ahh…! Sometimes… ngh… you take my words way too literally, damn it…! Ahh! T-Todoroki…!"

Those gaspy mewls of pleasure only spurred Todoroki on even further. He bobbed his head up and down, lips gently pressed tight around Bakugou's cock and tongue licking the shaft alongside the movements. His fingers also thrust deeper into Bakugou, touching and nudging all the right spots while stretching the narrow entrance.

"Ahhh! Todo… roki… Ngh!" moaned Bakugou, head falling back

against the folded futon behind him. His patience was starting to run thin as his body grew hotter and hotter, as his desire escalated to wanting more than just those touches and caresses. He lifted one of his hands from the tatami floor and softly tugged at a lock of red hair tickling him close to his waist. “Haa…! Todoroki… Ahh… T-Todoroki…”

Hearing Bakugou calling for him like that made Todoroki halt, though his fingers continued with their stretching mission, and look up to his lover. Bakugou seemed to be all but melting right now, with his brows slightly creased with impatience and cheekbones rosy and puffy due to his quickened breathing rhythm. He must have been on the verge of climaxing when Todoroki parted his lips and tongue from his cock and even just teasing him with fingers could make him burst right away. But that wasn’t what had made Todoroki stop.

“Hey, won’t you call me by my name?” asked Todoroki, straightening his sitting position on the floor while he adjusted the position of Bakugou’s legs to make more space for what was soon going to replace his fingers. “Do you really dislike my first name that much?”

“Huh? You want… haa… to talk about that *now* …!?” hissed Bakugou with a raspy voice, his moist red eyes tightening into a soft glare almost immediately. He gave a small kick to Todoroki’s upper leg with the heel of his foot and barked some more. “Forget about that for now and… Ngh… Ahh… Just fuck me already, damn it…!”

“It’s just… every time you say ‘Todoroki’ inside of this house, I can’t help but wonder which one of us you’re calling,” continued Todoroki, his lover’s exasperated groan passing unnoticed on his ears midst the pleasurable sighs and honeyed moans. “Is it me? Sis? Natsuo? It can’t be my father since you’ve been calling him a ‘slob’ lately.”

“It’s obviously you, you dense idiot…! Why the hell would I be calling for your siblings while we’re having sex!?” yelped Bakugou, gobsmack shocked at what he had just heard Todoroki saying. He had

experienced countless moments of osmium-level denseness but this one surpassed all of those past events by a landslide. Unless… “Haa…! I already said I won’t call you by your first name! Plot against me all you want… ngh… I still won’t say it!”

“Why are you being so stubborn about this? It’s a different name from what you’re used to, yeah, but it’s still my name, right?” pointed out Todoroki after a small sigh. Bakugou only turned his head the other way while snorting a moody ‘hmph!’ That reaction might have annoyed him more than Todoroki had expected, especially since his brain was currently in horny jealous mode. “You really won’t call me by my name?”

“I’ve said what I had to say and I have nothing more to add so this conversation is over…!” growled Bakugou, his glaring eyes tightening even further. It happened so fast Bakugou barely had time to do anything about it. With a swift movement of his hips, Todoroki thrust his hardened member into him in one go - typical hasty Todoroki, really. Bakugou would have climaxed from the numbing pleasure it elicited if his dense lover hadn’t had the stupid idea of grabbing his cock by the base while tightly squeezing it. “Ahhhh! Haa! Ngh…! Y-You…! Ahh…”

“Call my name? Please?” requested Todoroki with a loving voice, his lips gently kissing away the crystal clear tears that were sliding down Bakugou’s rosy cheeks - even though his hand was still gripping Bakugou’s dick as strongly as he could without causing an unnecessary amount of pain.

“N-No,” hissed Bakugou, quickly shaking his head. His denial was promptly replaced by more moans, as Todoroki finally decided to put his hips to good use and slowly started rocking both of their bodies. It would have felt out of this world if that annoying hand hadn’t been holding his twitching cock hostage. “Ahh…! Todo… roki… Hand… Ahhh! L-Let go… Nngh!”

“Haa… I’ll let go if you call me by my name,” said Todoroki, thrusting a little bit harder as he brought his body closer to Bakugou’s heaving chest. He slowly kissed Bakugou, aiming to sweeten him up some more by making him focus on their lovemaking rather than the ongoing spat. Was that strategy going to work? Only time would tell but the way Bakugou had wrapped his arms around his shoulders and neck and was clinging to his back while Todoroki pounded into him seemed to hint some good progress on his side. Another stronger hump made Bakugou tear their lips apart to cry out in pleasure but Todoroki quickly resumed with the chase, slowly climbing his neck with some occasional stops to nibble and suckle here and there until he caught a new hold of them. When his tongue lapped on Bakugou’s yet again, his cock was sweetly squeezed with a quivering embrace. “Ngh…! C’mon, just give it a rest already and call my name. I’ll make you feel even better afterwards… so make me feel a bit better too here.”

“I won’t… haa… call you by… that name…Not that name… Ahh…!” denied Bakugou, his forehead softly rubbing against Todoroki’s shoulder as he gave a small shake with his head. His nails reflexively clawed on his lover’s broad back when their rocking motions brought him close to one more dizzying climax but that infuriating grip on his cock made him unable to attain his blissful release yet again. “Ahhh! Todoroki… Ahh! L-Let go… Haa… I wanna come… Shit… Todoroki... ! Todoro- Ahhh!”

“No,” shortly denied Todoroki, using Bakugou’s earlier refusal against him now. All schemes and ploys could backfire, even if the one using them was an expert evil schemer like Bakugou. And it went without saying that the same also applied to Todoroki, who was all but a newbie in the arts of manipulation and coercion. Todoroki felt a weird hiccup coming from Bakugou’s chest, something that seemed to be neither shaking nor wheezing. His mouth nearly dropped to the tatami floor in shock when he sideways glanced at his lover and saw two thin streams of tears falling from Bakugou’s watery eyes. “...Eh!? Are you… crying because of this?”

“I-I ain’t crying…!!” yelped Bakugou with an obvious sobbing voice, his nose conspicuously sniffling right afterwards. No matter how he

tried to hide or excuse it, it was undeniable that he was, lo and behold, crying.

“You cry when bullied a little bit even though you’re a bully?” marvelled Todoroki, his brain nothing but rose-coloured thought of fluffy, barking chihuahuas and endless fields of fluttering dandelions. With a dead-serious expression on his face, he blurted out, “That’s cute.”

“S-Shut up! Die! Uhh… D-Drop dead! Sniff… Stop being such a tease and let me come already, you stupid, horny pervert…!!” hissed Bakugou with a few more sniffles and a couple more rolling tears.

“Okay, okay, I will. I’m sorry,” said Todoroki, doing his very best to not laugh or even chuckle and aggravate his prideful lover even further. He slowly released Bakugou’s cock while he gently licked the salty, watery lines on his tear-stained features, his nose now and then nuzzling against his warm skin. “I won’t insist on this any more for today. So could you at least tell me why you won’t call me by my name?”

“You just said you weren’t going to insist anymore!!” growled Bakugou, softly kicking Todoroki’s back a couple of times with the heels of his feet. However, Todoroki seemed to be in a ‘won’t take a no for an answer’ sort of mood, the way he just continued blankly staring at Bakugou despite being kicked around by him like that. He released a small, shaky sigh and an even smaller sniffle before he quietly whispered, “...Why did you have to choose your first name for your hero name too…?”

“.....Are you an idiot?” blurted out Todoroki after a long stretch of flabbergasted silence, which he used to figure out if he had misheard something or if he had been hallucinating out of sexual excitement.

“Who are you calling an idiot!?” hissed Bakugou, yet again restarting his kicking and fuming. “You’re the idiot! An idiot with a terrible, lazy as heck naming sense! Who the fuck even wants to use their first name as their hero name!? Are you that desperate for attention!? Want the whole country calling out your first name while you’re kicking some villain ass, is that it? Well, I ain’t gonna be one of them groupies! I ain’t calling you by your first name until you become a pro hero and I will only use your hero name while you’re at work! So deal with it! Better yet, pick another hero name!!!”

“You get jealous of the weirdest things,” chuckled Todoroki at first, but his amusement soon turned into full-fledged laughter. “My name and my hero name are different, Bakugou.”

“The hell they are! You’re not gonna fool me with such shitty excuses!” nearly howled Bakugou, forfeiting his kicking strategy and grabbing Todoroki’s head instead to shake it around a bit. It might put whatever piece that broke inside of his brain working normally once again. “No, there’s no such thing as an excuse that could fool me! Better luck never, you moron!”

“No, but they really are different,” said Todoroki, still chuckling to himself. “You see, my first name is written with the kanji for ‘burning’ and ‘freezing’ but my hero name is written in katakana. Different, right?”

“Yeah, I’m an idiot, alright. An idiot for falling in love with such a severe case of stupidity and denseness…” groaned Bakugou, his head flopping back against the folded futon. He sighed, “I’ve never been so turned off with myself like I am right now...”

“You still seem very turned on to me, Katsuki,” pointed out Todoroki, head slightly tilted to the left as he peered down at Bakugou’s groin.

“Well, no shit, Sherlo- Huh…?” scoffed Bakugou with a roll of his eyes but his words fell short when that name finally reached the depths of his mind and his whole face exploded into a myriad of shades of red. If Todoroki hadn’t caught his wrists halfway there, he would have slapped his face into hiding with his hands.

“It’s not that hard, is it?” noted Todoroki, the corner of his lips curling up into a small satisfied smirk in celebration of his victory. “And even if it was hard, you’re someone who’s able to do everything perfectly, right… *Katsuki* ?”

“Y-You damned opportunist asshole…” grumbled Bakugou, his whole body trembling from embarrassment. He stretched his arms over his head, forcing Todoroki closer to him once again through his hold to his wrists, and urged his lover to pick up where they had left off. “Enough with the self cockblock. If I get any more blue balled than this, I might end up becoming as stupid as some of our virgin losers. I still won’t call you by your name, though, so if that’s how you want to get off tonight, you might as well go masturbate to the sound of your own damn voice somewhere else.”

“You’ll change your mind in a couple of minutes,” chuckled Todoroki, one of his hands sliding up Bakugou’s wrist so he could hold his hand and intertwine their fingers on top of the folded futon while his other hand returned to Bakugou’s waist for some additional support.

“I ain’t that easy,” whispered Bakugou against Todoroki’s lips as he leaned in for a kiss. “At least give me a couple of hours or something…”

“Sure,” acknowledged Todoroki, bridging that last inch himself to kiss his adorable so-not-honest boyfriend.

“But if you don’t make me come in the next couple of minutes, I’ll

strangle you to death with the next batch of soba noodles I make!" hissed Bakugou right afterwards, his face scrunching up into a glaring frown as a mask to hide his pinkish cheekbones.

"I'm on it," said Todoroki with an expressionless nod of his head. He pulled his hips back and quickly pushed them forward once again, slamming his cock inside of Bakugou as far as that position enabled him to.

"Ahhh!" moaned Bakugou, nails digging deep into the back of Todoroki's hand as he reached the so sought climax with that single thrust. His vision flickered black and white in such a way that he couldn't even tell if he had closed his eyes or not at the moment of his orgasm. Bakugou's arched back tiredly dropped on the folded futon once again, the quick inflating and deflating motions of his heaving chest making his stick release dribble down his torso to the floor. "Haa… Haa… Shit…"

"Since this only took a couple of seconds, can I still expect to get my name in a couple of minutes?" asked Todoroki with an almost mocking deadpan expression on his face. Surprisingly, Bakugou didn't berate or yell at him for what he had blurted out, only turned his head against the futon and attempted to hide his blushing face in it. Eyebrow slightly arched, Todoroki leaned closer to Bakugou and worriedly asked, "Are you okay, Katsuki?"

"…Am not… So zip it for a bit and come here…" mumbled Bakugou under his breath, pushing his face even more strongly against the futon. He couldn't see Todoroki come closer but he sure did feel it, from the uncomfortably sticky mess getting sandwiched between their bellies to the pulsing hard member piercing his insides even more deeply as a result. Nevertheless, he still wrapped his free arm around Todoroki's back and switched his face's hiding spot from the futon to his beloved boyfriend's neck. "…if this becomes a freaking habit… I'm holding you responsible for it…….. Shou… to…"

I don't know which part I'm supposed to take responsibility for but I would either way, even if you didn't want me to, you silly koala, inwardly chuckled Todoroki, hugging Bakugou back just as strongly while giving a quick peck to his head.

A small nudge in the right direction, a lot of persistence and an even larger amount of patience truly were the perfect recipe to fix and solve almost everything.

Chapter 75

“Bakugou, you’re so erotic,” sighed Todoroki, arms crossed over the border of the bathtub as he leisurely remained submerged in the water from his chest down. There was a certain endearing sweetness about being allowed in the same bathing area as Bakugou while he’s thoroughly going through his butthole to clean any remains of his come. Endearing and so very hot too. A bottle of shampoo came flying straight to his head, hitting him precisely in the middle of his forehead. “Ouch…!”

“You shut up! I ain’t erotic! I’m cleaning up after your stupid mess!” growled Bakugou, already with another bottle on his hand just in case his lover decided to continue pursuing that conversation. “What do you even think I am, your cumdumpster!? We had sex in the morning before we came to your house, why the heck are you so horny and up for a freaking sex marathon already? If I hadn’t pulled the breaks, we’d still be humping like bunnies right now!”

“I think being happy makes me horny,” said Todoroki, softly rubbing the reddening bruise on his forehead. His heterochromatic eyes slowly slid down Bakugou’s naked, wet back and he tilted his head. “Or maybe it’s you that makes me so horny? A mixture of the two? We both got to feel good so does it really matter?”

“Yeah, it felt good but you need to start taking time, place and occasion more seriously or your monkey-brained sex drive will eventually screw us over, and not in the good sense!” admonished Bakugou, throwing the second bottle of shampoo for good measure. After releasing a small sigh, he quickly rinsed his body with the showerhead one last time and finally walked over to the bathtub. He grumbled, “Scooch over.”

Todoroki adjusted his sitting position on the bathtub, parting his arms from the edge and sliding his body until it was neatly resting on one of the ends. He then unceremoniously tapped his legs underwater

while he expressionlessly stared at Bakugou. It certainly tugged at his heartstrings the way Bakugou only rolled his eyes around and promptly took a seat in between his legs like requested.

“Are you okay? No problems whatsoever?” inquired Todoroki as he leaned his chin over Bakugou’s shoulder and peeked at his face from the side. “I might have gotten a bit too excited halfway through it.”

“You were a bit too excited from the very start,” corrected Bakugou, quickly pinching Todoroki’s nose with his fingers. His hand then dropped inside of the warm water, back comfortably leaning against Todoroki’s just as warm chest. “What was even that little sadistic stubborn stunt you pulled at the start?”

“It felt good in the end, right?” pointed out Todoroki with an innocent tilt of his head. He could feel a portion of his thigh being painfully pinched by Bakugou but it definitely didn’t hurt as much as being hit with a bottle of shampoo.

“Stop making it sound like I’m a fuckin’ masochist!” hissed Bakugou, his face scrunched up into a glaring frown as he peered over his shoulder. He cut Todoroki off just as he was about to open his mouth to retort back at him, possibly something stupidly infuriating. “One more word about that and I’ll be the one going full sadist on you next.”

Todoroki immediately closed his mouth shut.

“Geez… You’re always such a pain in the ass…” sighed Bakugou, leaning his back more snuggly against Todoroki in search of that absolutely perfect nestling spot. Once he finally got to the right position, he flopped the back of his head on Todoroki’s shoulder and sluggishly closed his eyes. It seemed they were cutting it close to his daily sleep quota already.

“Don’t fall asleep while in the bathtub,” advised Todoroki, taking Bakugou’s abrupt silence after that sugary sweet biting remark as an indication that the sleepy, cranky koala was about to take over his body. He chuckled when a small mumbled ‘I know that’ reached his ears but really, if Bakugou was to fall asleep just like this in his arms, Todoroki would be in a serious pinch. “Katsuki… If you fall asleep on me like this, I’ll get horny all over again…”

“Hm…?” mumbled Bakugou, his head turning against that broad shoulder with drowsy motions. A small crease slowly popped out near his closed eyes, soon followed by a suspicious, sudden eye-opening startle. He turned his upper body around so he could glance up and down at Todoroki. “Why the hell are you hard again!? Monkey-brained much!?”

“You were rubbing yourself on me for the longest time before you decided to start falling asleep against me,” said Todoroki with a dead serious demeanour, eyes staring right back at Bakugou. “It’s your fault, not mine.”

“We ain’t doing it anymore tonight,” cut off Bakugou, a sulky expression on his face as he straightened his body once again and crossed his arms over his chest to make a stance on his words. “You want me to be limping around on the last day of the year? Are you choosing a quickie over end of the year soba, is that it? I don’t like soba all that much but I prefer that to this!”

“Okay… If you stop rubbing yourself on me that adorably, it might go down eventually,” sighed Todoroki dejectedly, his arms circling Bakugou’s waist to pull him closer as if a child seeking some comfort from an oversized teddy bear.

Ugh… Damn it, I can never deal with that stupid puppy-eyed mug of his…, inwardly cursed Bakugou. He might not be able to directly see

Todoroki's face with their current position but he sure could picture it in his mind's eye in extremely vivid fashion. He grumbled and moaned to himself for a few minutes, all while being tightly hugged by Todoroki from behind - it was hard to ignore the close embrace, yes, but it was even harder to ignore the throbbing hard-on pressed against his back. "For as long as you don't put it in… I'll go along with your monkey-brained sex drive…"

"Eh?" gasped Todoroki, readily lifting his head from Bakugou's shoulder, all sparkly-eyed amidst his bewilderment. Seeing that lovely red shade colouring his lover's earlobes and the back of his neck signed the deal for him. Todoroki gingerly kissed the blushing neck, its skin darkening a shade more with that loving act. "Since I can't put it in, can I use your thighs instead?"

"Huh?" was all Bakugou managed to blurt out before his body was pushed forward against the other end of the bathtub, upper legs pressed close against one another by Todoroki's feverish hands. Feeling his hard cock slipping in between his thighs, teasingly close to his balls, was definitely a million times more embarrassing than all the times Todoroki had stuck it in his ass. It made him briefly reconsider his earlier okay but since the water blocked most of the visual aspect of it, it felt extremely petty to go back on his word out of sheer self-consciousness. "Ngh… Hurry up and come, you damn horndog."

"Even if you tell me that…" sighed Todoroki, voice slightly husky with arousal. He thrust his hips forward until his navel was snuggly pressed against Bakugou's rear - again and again rubbing his hard shaft on that soft, tight surface with pleasurable intent. Todoroki slowly lapped his tongue on the back of Bakugou's neck, leaving a couple of pinkish marks close to the beginning of his jawline. The shudder that climbed up Bakugou's spine due to his kisses and nibbles could even be felt as a slight tremor on his thighs. "Ngh… We went pretty hard at it in my bedroom, I don't think I can come that fast right now."

"Haa… Find a way, then. And do it fast!" hissed Bakugou after a small, shaky gasp. Todoroki had earlier complained about Bakugou

rubbing on him to the point he got another boner; well, Bakugou wanted to complain about the exact same thing right now. He had been on the verge of falling asleep before but Todoroki's aroused groans and the way he hammered him from behind had woken him up faster than a bucket of cold water could have. And that didn't apply to his brain only. It was simply impossible for Bakugou to not get turned on by Todoroki at this point. "Haa… T-Todoroki…"

"Wrong name," said Todoroki, biting down hard on Bakugou's neck right afterwards. He softly gnawed on his skin, teeth sinking down on that delicate, flushed portion of his flesh without perforating or cutting it. It wasn't the wrong name per se and Todoroki knew that it would take Bakugou some time to make the change full-time, but still...

"Ahhhh!!" The loud moan that leaked out of Bakugou's mouth echoed through the bathing area, adding more noise to the water splashing all around them. Yeah, he was now totally on board with Todoroki's seductive pace, some small reservations aside. He slid one of his hands off of the bathtub's edge and wrapped it around his aroused cock, pumping it in tandem with his lover's thrusts. "Haa… Shouto… Ahh, Shouto…!"

"Ngh, Katsuki…" Todoroki could feel his arousal escalating even further with those sweet mewls of his name. Unfortunately for his cranky koala, however, not in the sense that he was any closer to climaxing. It just meant he had to keep in mind that they were currently inside of a bathtub filled with water and a wrong move or accidental slip could spell drowning for either of the two. But with the unmeasurable urge to satisfy his lust alongside Bakugou, all Todoroki's brain could think about was how to keep the bare essential out of the water's reach and little else. He kept rocking their bodies, he kept lavishly enjoying the taste of Bakugou's wet skin and he most certainly kept on melting with every single one of Bakugou's moans and sighs.

"Shouto… Haa… Shouto…" called Bakugou again and again. Probably because no matter how much he pleasured himself with his hand or

how much he felt Todoroki's cock rubbing on him, it still wasn't enough. Everything was much more embarrassing than their usual nighttime activities but it wasn't nearly as satisfying. At the rate they were going, they'd be all wrinkly and overheating from the bathwater by the time one of them finally got to come. And he wanted to come fast. Preferably now. As soon as possible. On the other hand, he didn't exactly want to have sex again like that. His mind was a complete mess of horny thoughts of wanting more and wanting it different, which resulted in equally messy purring moans. "Ahh… Shouto... P-Put it in… Ahh! Ngh… N-No, wait…"

"Ngh! Which is it!?" barked back Todoroki. That seductive invitation nearly made him rush out from in between his thighs and into an even tighter hole but the second request, one which was the complete opposite of its predecessor, made him come to an extremely frustrating halt.

"Put it in… Ahh… but…!" managed to gasp Bakugou in between heavy panting and uncontrollable moans. He was forced to release his throbbing cock and tightly hold onto the bathtub's edge with his hands and arms when his wish was granted with a strong thrust, readily satiating the itch for more he was feeling deep inside of him. Perhaps a bit too deep inside of him. Despite all of the previous stretching and humping they did in Todoroki's bedroom, it still felt unusually narrow. And that narrowness felt out of this world, even to Bakugou himself. "Ahhh! S-Shouto… Ahhhh…"

"Shit… It feels so good inside of you," groaned Todoroki, his eyes tightly closed as he took a couple of deep breaths to level his ragged breathing rhythm. He no longer needed to hold Bakugou's thighs with his hands so he slowly slid one of them to his lover's chest, likewise inflating and deflating as if about to explode. And the maddening heartbeat he could feel against his fingertips? It was definitely what some researchers referred to as 'two hearts beating as one'. Todoroki moved his hand slightly more upwards and gently cupped Bakugou's burning features with it. A single glance to his half-lidded, dazed red eyes, rosy cheekbones and gasping mouth told him that yes, Bakugou was feeling just as good as - if not even better than - he was. "Haa… Katsuki…"

“Mmhm…!” sweetly moaned Bakugou against Todoroki’s tender kiss. He didn’t want Todoroki to move a single inch from that position, all so he could bask on and relish the sensual gratification of that dizzying pleasure. But he was wrong. The best part came when Todoroki started moving his hips and hit, stirred and rubbed his deepest spots. Bakugou’s mouth would have certainly released some more obscene moans and sounds if it wasn’t so preoccupied with kissing his lover. He even made sure to loop one of his arms around Todoroki’s head to secure their kisses and tongue action throughout the intense lovemaking. Not that it was a fool-proof solution; a stronger thrust or a sudden pinch or pull to his nipples made Bakugou part their lips a few times, but both sought to strengthen their union just as fast.

Their ardent passion and overflowing love weren’t to last for very long, however. No matter how big of a sex drive these two lovebirds had, their bodies still had their limits and they were bordering so very close to it after the previous rounds in the bedroom. The sex felt insanely good but was insanely short.

“Mmmmh…!!” screamed Bakugou, his voice getting greedily stolen by Todoroki’s biting kiss. The water circling their bodies rippled with large waves as they got off hard in each other’s embrace, both gulping down as much air into their lungs as possible after the long kiss and breathtaking climax. Bakugou only didn’t slump down against the bathtub’s wall because his lover’s hand was still holding him close to his thundering heart - hence he ended up slumping down against his chest, the dead weight of his body nearly making Todoroki fall backwards on the warm water.

“Are you… haa… okay…?” asked Todoroki, slowly pushing Bakugou’s body to a better sitting position while he also adjusted his own. He kept one of his arms closely wrapped around his lover’s waist as he leaned them back on the bathtub’s end, seeking a small break for his pleasantly exhausted body and time to organise his jumbled thoughts after the mindblowing orgasm.

“You just… haa… messed up… haa… all of the… cleaning I did… haa… you dumbass…” wheezed Bakugou, body completely sapped out of strength. He doubted he’d be able to get out of the bathtub anytime soon. Heck, he didn’t even know how long he’d be able to keep talking with Todoroki without falling asleep mid-sentence. “And I told you… haa… I don’t like it… from the… haa… back… I want… your stupid mug… haa… right in front of me…”

“Yeah, sorry… Haa… I’ll help you with the cleaning… this time…” sighed Todoroki as he gave some soft pats to the side of Bakugou’s waist. Out of the blue, his back slid down slightly more against the bathtub, until the back of his head was neatly pieced against the acrylic edge. “In a couple of minutes…”

“Hah… No endurance… haa… at all, huh?” chuckled Bakugou in amusement. Usually, he was the one who got all drained from their crazy sex marathons so seeing Todoroki just as tired after going at it like two dogs in heat was akin to squeezing a small victory out of him. He sluggishly turned his body sideways, nearly slipping out of Todoroki’s body a few times due to lack of strength on his limbs, but he eventually managed to lay himself with his stomach down on top of Todoroki’s panting chest. “That’s what you get… haa… for being all… monkey-brained… haa… but not monkey-bodied… Hehehe…”

“And who was it that was complaining about me not minding time, place and occasion but just asked to have sex in the bathtub…?” deadpanned Todoroki, looking straight into Bakugou’s devilish smirk and the mischievous twinkle in his tired eyes. He briefly adjusted his sitting position once again, just to play safe and make sure that Bakugou’s new laid down position on the bathtub was seemingly comfortable for both. With that worry out of his mind, he gently caressed Bakugou’s wet features with his thumb. “I’ll work on my endurance from now on. So let’s do this again.”

“Not in your family home’s bathroom, that’s for sure…” scoffed Bakugou with a small roll of his eyes. He once again let his body fully slump down on top of Todoroki, chin resting on his chest right above the water level as he peered up at his face. “But yeah, more endurance

would be good… And some more muscles too… If your body grows up to look more like your father's, I bet our sex life would get even more insane. Yeah, all sorts of insane, hehehe..."

"Did you just imagine having sex with me… but with my father's body?" asked Todoroki, so gobsmack over what he had just heard coming out of Bakugou's mouth that he could bare speak. The small shrug he gave as an answer royally pissed him off, that's all he could conclude as he grumbled, "And then I'm the cheater…"

"Ahahahaha!" Bakugou wasn't a big fan of pouting, sour-looking Todoroki but if it was brought out because of his playful teasing, then he was all for seeing that small change on his expressionless demeanour. He craned his neck a little bit and quickly stole a kiss from Todoroki's sulky lips. "I just want to love you in all sorts of ways… Isn't that what you're always telling me, *Shouto* ?"

"You're so unfair sometimes," sighed Todoroki, a small smile inadvertently slipping into his lips. He squashed Bakugou's cheeks with both hands and retributed the quick kiss with one of his own, just slightly longer. "I really do want to love you in all sorts of ways, though. Even your most unlovable sides."

"Hey, what's that supposed to mean?" said Bakugou, his face immediately scrunching up with a frown. "All of my sides are lovable. Those that don't love all of me are idiots with a shitty taste or blind, deaf and mute!"

"Yeah, that's probably my current number one concern," deadpanned Todoroki with a monotone voice. Jealousy aside, cheating fantasies aside, he knew he was hoarding all of Bakugou's love - when it came to romantic and sexual love, at the very least. Bakugou obviously had others he loved and cared for, just like Todoroki had. Bakugou obviously had others that loved and cared for him, not just Todoroki. But would it be too selfish of him to want to be the only one who loved all of Bakugou Katsuki, every single inch and crevice of his

body, every single bit and piece of his being, until it reached an unrivalled 100%?

“What, feeling jealous and possessive again?” scoffed Bakugou, slowly inching his face closer to Todoroki. “Well, that’s just great. Go ahead and burn yourself out with jealousy. I’ll use that heat to blow it all away afterwards.”

“I so wish I had the stamina to go one more round because that line was a killer one, Katsuki…” groaned Todoroki, half-hiding his blushing features with the back of his hand. A hiding place that didn’t last for as long as Todoroki would have appreciated it.

“That goes for both of us,” said Bakugou, his lips stretched into one of his heart-stopping, soul-warming gentle smiles as he removed Todoroki’s hand from his face. The smile quickly went away when he suddenly loudly groaned and dropped his head against Todoroki’s chest. “I wanna fuckin’ sleep... Can you hurry up, clean me up and take me out of the bathtub back to your room? Without getting a boner again, if possible. If we fuck a single time more, I’ll die… I’ll definitely… drop… dead...”

It was now Todoroki’s turn to hastily remove a limp, passed out Bakugou from a bathtub due to overheating and sleep deprivation.

Chapter 76

Todoroki slowly, sluggishly woke up that morning with the nagging feeling that his name was being called again and again. His adorable koala was even calling out to him in their dreams and it was by his first name, can you imagine that, concluded his extremely drowsy brain.

It turned out that Todoroki truly was only imagining all of that. Or better yet, replacing his older sister's voice with Bakugou's due to still being half-asleep and with his head in the clouds from the previous night's adventurous tryst.

"-uto. Shouto? Are you awake already?" called Fuyumi, her hand softly knocking on the wooden structure of the bedroom's sliding door. "Sorry to bother you while you're trying to rest, I just wanted to check your plans for today. ...Well, if he's still sleeping, I guess I can come back to ask him again in an hour or so."

"Nngh… No… I'm awake now…" mumbled Todoroki with a groggy voice. He removed one of his hands from underneath the futon and sluggishly rubbed one of his sleepy eyes. "You were asking… about our plans? I don't think we have any yet… At least not for today… Only for tomorrow."

"Oh, is that so? Natsuo and I had promised mom we'd go visit her later today, before lunchtime," said Fuyumi after releasing a small sigh of relief. "Do you two also want to come?"

"Yes!" promptly acknowledged Todoroki, his sleepiness readily exploding into his usual sparkly expressionless demeanour. The prospect of that so yearned for meeting finally happening made him feel so excited that he ended up jumping into a sat down position on the futon - even with Bakugou sleeping half on top of him, half on top

of the futon. Todoroki wrapped his arms around his sleeping lover to keep him from slipping off of him and bang his head somewhere once again and declared without missing a beat. “We’ll go. We’ll get up right away so we can go with you.”

“You don’t need to rush so much. Didn’t I just say we’re only going before lunchtime?” Fuyumi chuckled. “You can take your time getting up. I’m in the kitchen preparing breakfast if you need anything.”

Finally. Mom will finally be able to meet Katsuki!, inwardly celebrated Todoroki, his body nearly vibrating with so much excitement contained in his expressionless outward demeanour. He peered down at the fast asleep Bakugou and, even without a mirror, he could feel his facial muscles stretching and yanking to their physical limits to shape up a one-in-a-million smile. It was quite a pity that Bakugou had been asleep to see it - and to hear the upcoming plans. But that was something that Todoroki was set on rectifying as soon as possible.

“Katsuki,” gently called Todoroki as he laid down his body on the futon once again. Fingers met with soft, spiky blonde locks as Todoroki ruffled Bakugou’s head against his chest. His hand continued sliding down the back of his head and neck until his arm settled itself around his slender waist. “Katsuki, wake up. I know you probably want to spend the whole morning sleeping but… there’s a place I want to take you to today.”

“Nnn… Not… now…” groaned Bakugou, his voice etched with drowsiness all the way to his vocal cords. He sluggishly turned his head, in an attempt to bury his face directly against Todoroki’s chest, but a hand locked his chin in place and then led it upwards. He opened one of his red eyes all but a thin slit, which was the bare minimum to be able to glance around his close quarters.

“Yes now,” deadpanned Todoroki in a slightly admonishing tone. He rolled their bodies against the futon and reversed their positions, their chests well pressed against one another as he kept Bakugou’s drowsy

face caged with his hands.

Todoroki had acted too late. As soon as Bakugou's back landed on the futon, his second sleep of that morning started.

"....." Todoroki expressionlessly stared and stared at his sleeping lover, his soft, squishy cheeks squashed against the palms of his hands in a quite endearing, extremely funny fashion. If it were any other day, Todoroki would have curled up against Bakugou and gone to sleep again too - but they had more important businesses to take care of somewhere else. No time to laze around or flirt in bed.

Which was the fastest way to wake up a tremendously sleepy Bakugou, Todoroki marvelled in the recesses of his brain. Memories of previous mornings flashed before his eyes, one after another, so many in such a short period of time that it took Todoroki a fair amount of minutes to come up with a strategy.

He'd go with Bakugou's recurring morning seduction ploys.

"Katsuki, if you don't wake up fast, I'm going to use your chest this time?" deadpanned Todoroki, his voice as monotone as a robot's. He took a hold of the hem of Bakugou's shirt and yanked it up all the way to his neck as fast and swiftly as if he was ripping a bandaid from a small cut. Without thinking twice about the safety of his plan, Todoroki sank his teeth in one of the perky, rosy nipples at his disposal.

"OUCH...!! What the fuck is wrong with you all of a sudden, you fuckin' asshole!? I'M GONNA FUCKIN' KILL YOU, YOU---!"

[We're experiencing some technical difficulties. Please hold on while Bakugou thoroughly teaches Todoroki a certain lesson on how

sensitive nipples can be after being tenderly loved throughout a steamy night.]

"Oh, you were quite fast at waking up and getting changed," cheerfully noted Fuyumi, her attention caught by the soft sound of the sliding door opening. She turned away from the stove, a steaming pot with miso soup gently simmering on top of it, and warmly smiled at her younger brother and Bakugou. For a fraction of a second only, that is. One of her eyebrows quickly arched in puzzlement when she noticed a few unusual details on her brother's face. "What happened to you, Shouto? Did you fall while getting changed?"

"Human teeth and jaws are frighteningly powerful…" deadpanned Todoroki, rubbing the countless bite marks on his cheeks, nose and chin with the pads of his fingers. "I thought I was going to get my nose ripped off…"

"Hmph!!" That snort was all Bakugou said as he stepped inside of the kitchen, a deep frown on his face and arms crossed over his chest in a blatant display of sourness and sulkiness. He walked up to the stove and peered inside of the pot simmering on top of it, all while his hands adjusted his jacket and the scarf wrapped around his neck. "Breakfast almost ready, huh?"

"Yes, I only need to warm up yesterday's miso soup," acknowledged Fuyumi, also curiously observing Bakugou's appearance that morning. "If you're feeling cold, do you want me to turn on the heater in the kitchen?"

"I'm good. Just, don't ask…" sourly grumbled Bakugou, reflexively snuggling his scarf even more closely around the back of his neck. He wasn't cold per se, the kitchen was plenty hot due to the steam and heat of the cooking, so his current predicament laid somewhere else. The culprit was, obviously, Todoroki and his stupid mouth. *If I had known beforehand that we were going out today, I would have punched that horny dumbass straight in the face the moment he started sucking and*

biting my neck…

"Okay…?" said Fuyumi, more in the shape of a question than as an answer. She peered up to the clock by the stove and sighed, "Only Natsuo left then. Shouto, could you go check on him? He probably fell asleep again right after I went to wake him up."

"Sure," acknowledged Todoroki with a small nod of his head. He put down the plates and bowls he was removing from the cupboard on the counter and left the kitchen once again, though not before throwing a tiny apologetical glance at his lover. Bakugou in a bad mood so early in the morning led him to think that he probably messed up big time somewhere last night. Which part, he couldn't tell since so much had happened yesterday. Or, perhaps, it was just the bad wake up call he had gotten from Todoroki… Both were equally likely to anger Bakugou one way or another and he had been vehemently admonished already for one of them; hence, all Todoroki could do was wait for Bakugou's anger to cool down on its own.

"Seriously, that guy is always the same thing…" mumbled Bakugou under his breath after releasing a small exasperated sigh. Todoroki's sad puppy face was back and he knew he was the cause for it this time. But if Bakugou spoiled him any more than this, Todoroki would wind up repeating the same idiotic mistakes again and again so maybe a little bit of disciplining and training was in need. Ignoring him and continuing with his plans for the day is what Bakugou should do right now rather than go comfort his lover after having nearly bitten him to an early death. "Fuyumi, do you mind if I borrow your kitchen again?"

"Sure, use whatever you need," said Fuyumi with a beaming smile. She truly was in a good mood that day, now that things at her house seemed to have acquired a certain degree of normalcy after years and years of a tense environment. She wasn't counting on someone as volatile as Bakugou to be the needed peacemaker for that to happen and she certainly wasn't expecting her father to be so lenient with the whole situation after complaining and yapping about his youngest son's boyfriend so intensely, that much she was willing to confess.

However, if the whole family was now open to accept and welcome a new member to their midst, maybe they were also walking towards a future where they could accept one another too, regardless of what might have happened in the past. Fuyumi was truly expectant about the direction they had all been suddenly blown towards. She turned off the stove and moved the pot to another burner, preventing the residual heat from affecting its contents this way. “Do you need help with anything?”

“Yeah, I do,” acknowledged Bakugou as an afterthought, his eyes peering into the distance as he inwardly pieced together the best approach for that task. Of all of the routes he could think of, there was one that spelt a guaranteed victory. “You have any tiered bento boxes ready to be used?”

“Eh? A bento box?” repeated Fuyumi, head tilted to the left as she observed the small smirk starting to curl up the corner of Bakugou’s lips.

Was Bakugou… perhaps scheming something yet again?

Chapter 77

Rei was quietly reading a novel when a soft knock on her door echoed inside of her silent hospital room. A small smile promptly curled up her lips and she settled down her book on a side table - she already knew who was waiting on the other side of the door.

“‘Morning, mom! How are you feeling today?” cheerfully greeted Natsuo, one of his hands raised high in the air as he opened the sliding door. “It’s the last day of the year so we gotta make good use of it!”

“Says the one who stayed in bed until the very last minutes,” chuckled Fuyumi, her eyes rolling around just the slightest as a taunt. She settled a carrier bag next to the bed and happily smiled at her mother. "Good morning, mom. I brought you the clothes I took home with me last week to wash."

"Good morning to you too. And thank you as always, Fuyumi," said Rei, her soft smile briefly sparkling some more. "You should continue using your school break to sleep for as long as you need, Natsuo. You’ve been working very hard to get your college degree."

"Told you so," said Natsuo, smugly glancing sideways at his older sister. He and Fuyumi had been bickering on their way to the hospital about Natsuo's latest recurring oversleeping mornings - and it seemed like Natsuo had guessed his mother's reaction to it to a T.

"Morning, mom," also greeted Todoroki, arriving a few moments later than his older siblings due to a couple of delays on his way to that familiar hospital room.

“Shouto! So you’re also spending New Year’s at home?” noted Rei,

eyes wide open in surprise at seeing her youngest together with his other siblings. According to his letters, he was planning to spend New Year's at the dorm so it would have to be quite a coincidence for both to come to visit her at the same time. She quickly pushed her astonishment aside and tilted her head with a worried glint in her eyes. "What happened to your face? Did you get hurt while training?"

"It's his fault," deadpanned Todoroki, gesturing with his thumb towards the last member of the group, who was stepping inside of the hospital room right behind him.

"It was *your* fault and you know it," scoffed Bakugou, a sour expression on his face as he turned his head the other way. It was only a momentary tantrum, however. Bakugou soon faced the hospital room once again and leisurely said a short, "Hi."

"Long story short, they're staying at our house for New Year's," said Natsuo, trying his best to not start laughing his ass off at his mother's completely gobsmack and lost demeanour. It had been a long, long while since he had last seen such an expression on Rei's face, which only fueled his delight even further. "The whole house has been going ballistic in these last couple of days."

"I'll make the long story long," sighed Fuyumi with a disapproving shake of her head and a quick elbow stab to her brother's torso. The moment Natsuo said 'going ballistic', Rei's face went from surprised to ghastly pale due to numbing worry. Not a very good conversation starter, that's for sure. "Dad told Shouto to return home for New Year's but you know how he is. He said the wrong things with the wrong tone and his attempt at a New Year spent in family kind of flopped on the spot. But Bakugou-kun brought him back home the next morning and has been staying at our place since then."

"He coerced and dragged me back home," corrected Todoroki, his expressionless demeanour growing momentarily even blanker as he sideways glanced at the deceiving culprit. He only obtained a small

scoff as a reply to his rebuttal.

“Things were a bit tense once dad got home from work and found out about Bakugou-kun," continued Fuyumi, her voice coming out slightly tired, maybe even pitying. “And I mean, *really* tense. I thought that the whole house would be burnt down a couple of times… But, surprisingly, Dad warmed up to Bakugou-kun’s presence in Shouto’s life faster than I was expecting. In his own egotistical way, I guess…”

“I-Is that so…?” commented Rei, her eyes jumping back and forth in a fluster between Fuyumi and the two young men standing near the door. As their mother and as Enji’s wife, she couldn’t help but feel guilty that they had to go through such troubling moments. Still, it was mouth-gaping to hear that her husband had, for some ludicrous lucky strike, actually been so lenient with his son’s romantic relationship. Rei would have never thought such a thing to be possible, in all honesty. “That must have been rough on you two, Shouto, Bakugou...”

“I’m used to it,” deadpanned Todoroki with a dismissive shrug of his shoulders.

“That slob has another thing coming if he thinks he can dictate my whole life,” scoffed Bakugou, his lips slowly curling up to a smug smirk. “I’ll keep charging him for my food until he stops bitching at us for every little thing we do or don’t do. I so want to see the look on his face when I get an entire house furnished at his expense, hehehe…”

“Japanese or Western-style?” inquired Todoroki, head slightly tilted to the left as he sideways glanced at his lover. “I still prefer Japanese rooms but sleeping on a bed isn’t that bad either.”

“That’s up for discussion once I’m done squeezing the first million out

of him," said Bakugou, his voice so leisure and neutral that it heavily contrasted with his evil-sounding words.

"Why not both?" suggested Rei, her worried expression gently melting into a small smile. That unexpected momentary shock had made her forget about the dozens of letters she had read in the last few months, filled with all the reasons why everyone should think of Bakugou as a beast of its own league. She couldn't imagine her husband getting along all that well with him, that was certain - but a tense, argument-riddled relationship didn't seem to have any effects on Bakugou, by the look on his face and his resolute war declaration. He was, beyond doubt, the perfect match for her youngest son and their family. "I'm sure you two would be able to mash them together very nicely."

"Sleeping on a futon on top of a bed…!" gasped Todoroki out the blue, his eyes sparkling in excitement at the prospect of such an ingenious sleeping arrangement.

"That's not how fusions work," chided Bakugou, Rei, Fuyumi and Natsuo at the same time, with Bakugou adding a 'you big idiot' at the end of the sentence.

After Todoroki's accidental ice-breaking comment, the conversation steered even more animatedly than before. It had been a long time, perhaps it was even the first time, for Rei's hospital room to have such a festive ambience to it. Fuyumi shared and discussed cooking techniques and several recipes with Bakugou, with Rei giving her two cents as an experienced housewife and mother and Todoroki and Natsuo throwing in some comments and requests for future meals. Natsuo at some point shared his intention of also wanting to introduce his girlfriend to his family, though he was still adamant about getting her to spend too much time with Enji and how it could negatively impact their relationship since, well, not everyone had the same balls of steel that Bakugou had. And, obviously, everyone wanted to hear the first-person narration of life at U.A. and the couple's weekend dates and adventures.

Without any of them noticing, several hours went by.

“Excuse me, Todoroki-san,” said a nurse, gently knocking on the sliding door before opening it. “It’s time to serve lunch but since you’re still with your visitors, would you prefer it if we bring you your meal at a later time?”

“Oh no, we got so absorbed in our conversation that we didn’t even notice the time!” yelped Fuyumi, getting up from the chair as fast as lightning. “We better get going or we’ll all end up eating lunch way too late.”

“Damn, time sure flies when you’re having fun,” sighed Natsuo, softly scratching the back of his head as he also got up from his seat.

“Ah! That’s right! There’s this thing I need to talk about with the Head Nurse!” suddenly yelped Fuyumi once again. “Natsuo, Shouto, you come with me too. Your impressions might also come in handy.”

“Huh?” interjected Natsuo, slightly confused by that out of the blue request. The look on his older sister’s face quickly made him catch on to what was actually going on. “O-Ohh! Right, that thing! Yeah, let’s go talk with the Head Nurse!”

“But didn’t we talk with her before we came-” pointed out Todoroki in all of his innocent, dense ignorance.

“It’s about another thing. Just shut up and come,” groaned Natsuo, grabbing his youngest sibling by the back of his jacket so he could tow him out of the room together with Fuyumi. “We’ll be back in a couple of minutes!”

“Yeah,” acknowledged Bakugou, left behind in the room with a blank disbelieving frown on his face. *They’re all such bad actors and so easy to figure out. Must be something that runs in the family…*

“Bakugou,” called Rei after a small chuckle. She moved from the bed to near her desk, from where she once again called for the blonde with her hand. “Come here.”

“Huh?” One of his eyebrows slightly arched in puzzlement, Bakugou did as he was told and walked closer to the desk. He wasn’t feeling suspicious per se but that was definitely not what he was expecting out of being left alone together with his boyfriend’s mother.

“Here you go,” said Rei, a small smile on her lips as she handed over a couple of neatly folded sheets of paper. Her smile broadened slightly more as she observed Bakugou unfolding the first one and begin to read it. “I have several more but I believe those serve as the perfect example.”

Rei had never thought of herself as someone who pulled pranks on other people or teased them to obtain an amusing reaction out of them, but there was a certain fondness and hilarity about seeing Bakugou’s face going from a frown to a scarlet, redder than the reddest shade of red blush as he quickly skipped from one letter to the other.

“…T-That… shameless son of a bitch…!!” blurted out Bakugou, his body trembling all over in utter embarrassment. Just how dense one had to be to have the balls to write love letter after love letter about stupid daily life events, stupid blabbering thoughts and stupid, uncalled for expositions with one too many details to their own mother? It was simply unthinkable for someone like Bakugou - yet, for some reason, it made him fall head over heels in love with Todoroki all over again. Once the sizzling temperature on his face started to calm down a tiny bit, Bakugou finally realised what had accidentally slipped out of his mouth earlier out of flabbergasted self-

consciousness. He gasped, “Ah… N-No offence…”

“Ahaha, I know. I’ve read Shouto’s letters,” acknowledged Rei amidst a few giggles. Bakugou truly was just like her son had described him - a gentle, awkward boy who most of the time came off as the bad guy despite always having other’s best interests in mind. A heart-warming smile on her lips, Rei softly bowed her head at the beet red blonde. “I’m sure you two still have quite a lot of challenges and hardships ahead of you. Some will be things you already expected to face, some will be sudden problems that were laid out before you without you even realising it. But I hope you can continue helping, supporting and staying by my son’s side for many years to come, as someone who is chasing the same dream as he is, as one of his most esteemed rivals and as the man he loves above anything else in this world. I would say ‘I leave Shouto in your hands’ but I think that would be a bit too unfair for him. He wants you to rely on him just as much as he relies on you, after all. So instead, I’ll say… Thank you for making Shouto a much happier man. Thank you for loving my son just as much as he loves you.”

“Geez… Like mother, like son…” sighed Bakugou, his voice shaking with tender sentimentality as he half-hid his blushing features behind the countless letters on his hand. “Why do you gotta be so damn sappy all the time...?”

“It was a quite pleasant surprise to discover that Shouto is so similar to me,” chuckled Rei, gently placing her hand on top of Bakugou’s head to pat it. “It set my heart at ease, in so many different ways. I think I owe you a thank you for that too, Bakugou.”

“You don’t need to thank me for anything, I’m just doing whatever the hell I want,” grumbled Bakugou, his blush spreading all the way to the tips of his ears and the back of his neck. Out of the blue, he lowered the letters back down and lifted his head, accidentally startling Rei in the process. “Besides! I don’t love him as much as he loves me! I love him much more than he loves me! Shouto can chase after me his whole life for all I care, be it as a hero, be it for everything else. He won’t be able to steal any of my 1st places away from me ever, that I

can guarantee you! And do I need or want any thank you's for that? Hell no! Having that moron at my beck and call whenever I please, at any given moment of the day, is more than enough."

"You call us 'sappy' but you're also extremely romantic with your love declarations," noted Rei, blinking her eyes a couple of times in surprise. She tilted her head and body to the left and peered over in the door's directions. "Don't you think so too?"

"This adorable side of him never ceases to amaze me," deadpanned Todoroki, his hand still hovering close to the door handle he had just used to slid the door open. Fuyumi and Natsuo stood next to him, feeling equal amounts of bashfulness and amusement over having overheard that part of the conversation without meaning to.

"I- I- I'm- I'm so done with this family…!!!" screeched Bakugou, steam nearly erupting out of his ears as his whole face flushed deep scarlet yet again. He carefully returned the letters back to Rei and immediately stomped out of the room, leaving a couple of nurses with their mouth gaping wide open in his wake.

"Ah! Katsuki, wait," called Todoroki, starting to run down the corridor to go after Bakugou but halting right as he was about to leave the open door. He peeked inside the hospital room again and gave a small, gentle smile at his mother to bid her goodbye. "We'll come to visit you again before school starts."

"I'll be waiting," chuckled Rei, waving her hand at her son as he zoomed out through the corridor chasing after his runaway lover. "Will you also be leaving with them, Fuyumi, Natsuo?"

"Yes, we'll also get going now," acknowledged Fuyumi with a couple of nods of her head. "We have a glorious lunch waiting for us at home."

“Enjoy yours too, Mom,” added Natsuo, likewise waving his hand to their mother as they began walking down the corridor too.

“You had quite a cheerful visit today, Todoroki-san,” said the nurse as she pulled a metallic cart that held several trays in it. “Such a numerous family.”

“Yes. And it just keeps on growing,” acknowledged Rei in between a few lighthearted chuckles. She adjusted the small side table next to her bed to make way for her meal and took a seat on the bed. Rather than the usual tray with several plates and bowls in it, she was presented with a tiered bento box wrapped with a furoshiki. “Oh my. I didn’t know the hospital was providing special meal sets to their patients to celebrate New Year’s.”

“And it isn’t,” chuckled the nurse, also leaving a pair of chopsticks on the side table just in case those hadn’t been packed in the fancy looking bento box. “Your visitors just now talked with the Head Nurse earlier and requested if they could replace your arranged lunch for that home-cooked meal. She was a bit adamant about it at first, due to the hospital policies, but after checking with your husband, she gave them her okay. You know the sons and daughters adore their mother when they go out of their way to bring her New Year’s food while she’s staying at the hospital, ahaha. Please enjoy your meal.”

“Thank you… I will,” said Rei, her eyes stuck on the beautiful baby blue wrapping cloth around the bento box. Now that she took a closer look at it, she could indeed recognise its design and patterns. Slowly, with her breath held tight in her lungs out of sheer bewilderment, she undid the knot at the top and let the cloth cascade down the sides of the tiered bento box. Sure enough, she immediately recognised that bento box as one of the staple objects of her kitchen.

On top of the bento box’s lid was a folded piece of paper. It hadn’t

been placed inside of an envelope nor was it made of elaborate decorative paper. Just a piece of paper that could very well have been ripped out of a notebook. Rei gingerly picked it up, opened it and the air she was holding inside of her lungs finally burst out so she could exhale a short laugh.

'If you laze around at the hospital for too long, you're gonna miss your opportunity to live with Shouto before I permanently steal him away from all of you' - is what could be read on the folded piece of paper.

"Well, I can't let that happen, now can I?" chuckled Rei with a tear-stained smile. She lightly wiped her eyes with the back of her fingers, got up from the bed and walked back to her desk. She stored Bakugou's small letter together with the dozens she had received from her youngest son.

Rei would eat her home-cooked lunch with gusto and then, maybe, attempt to give her husband a call to thank him for letting their kids bring her lunch.

She needed to do her best so she could have some quality years under the same roof as her youngest son before he left the nest to start his own family somewhere else.

Chapter 78

“Pfft… He’s completely knocked out, isn’t he?” snorted Natsuo, his eyes sideways peering at the smartphone placed on top of the kotatsu. Unfortunately for them, Fuyumi’s cell phone had just received a phone call from their very loud father, who was seemingly in the middle of a just as loud location. Natsuo had only half-heartedly listened to what he had to say and now and then offered small grunts or short sentences as an answer, but the unexpected happened while they were talking with Enji - there were no hissy fits or barked comebacks coming from Bakugou until the call was over.

“Can’t blame him there,” chuckled Fuyumi, placing her cell phone back in her pocket. She peered over to the opposite side of the kotatsu, where her youngest brother was neatly sat down at. A spiky-looking bundle of yellow remained curled up on his lap - some would have thought at first sight that it was a cat or a small dog, but it was actually Bakugou, fast asleep half inside of the kotatsu, half on top of his boyfriend’s lap. “We went all out with this morning’s New Year’s cooking spree. Not to mention, he just met Mom for the first time today. It might not have shown on his face or behaviour but he was probably nervous, don’t you think?”

“I don’t think Katsuki’s the type that sweats over first meetings, no matter who the other person might be,” deadpanned Todoroki, his eyes blankly staring at his older sibling. If anything, Bakugou had a knack to create the absolute worst first meeting with everyone he bumped into - teachers, classmates, students from other schools, pro heroes, everyone, really. It was usually a bad first impression that was dispelled after a couple more meetings and conversations, however. For as snarky, violent and moody as Bakugou could be, he was plenty liked by everyone around him. Todoroki placed one of his hands on top of Bakugou’s head and gently caressed his blonde locks. A soft smile remained on his lips as he added, “He’s the type that goes to bed early and gets up early. If he goes to bed late, he ends up oversleeping. He always gets the same amount of sleep every night, even if that means getting some sleep compensation done during our days off. I’m kinda starting to pick up that same routine myself.”

“It’s a pity that he’s going to miss the start of the new year, though,” sighed Natsuo, leisurely leaning himself closer to the kotatsu while slipping his arms underneath its warm covers. He preferred cold over hot but a kotatsu was a completely different type of warmth. His eyes pointedly turned to the TV screen, the cheerful conversations between the program’s hosts and guests and its animated music turned down low to not disturb the resting teen. On the corner of the screen, a countdown ticked by, second by second. “Only three minutes left, huh… This year sure went by fast. Or is it just me that has the feeling that time is going by faster than it used when I was younger?”

“I have the exact same feeling,” confessed Fuyumi with a small sigh. “Compared to when we were kids, time just passes by in a blink of an eye. You’ll see, next thing we know, it’s already summer. Then New Year’s all over again.”

“Time goes by fast when we’re having fun,” said Todoroki, his smile slowly, steadily stretching his lips more and more. “The latter half of this year was really, really fun.”

“That’s so true!” acknowledged both Natsuo and Fuyumi at the same time, big smiles also on their faces as they saw the satisfied, so very fulfilled expression on their younger brother’s face.

“Oh! Ohh! The final countdown is here!” excitedly noted Natsuo, his body shooting back up to straighten his sitting position. Though it was a calm, relaxing celebration, the eagerness and thrill coming from everyone involved was palpable - from the program’s hosts and guests to those watching from home together with their family and loved ones. Once the countdown reached zero, once a new, hopefully better year began, everyone within the TV screen exploded in ecstatic celebration, with colourful flashes and glitter flying over the place; the kotatsu room and its inhabitants, however, took the new beginning in a much calmer but just as excited fashion. Natsuo raised his arms high in the air and exclaimed, “It’s over! Old year out, new year in, baby!”

“Oh?” interjected Todoroki, some rustling and shuffling further down made his eyes travel from the TV screen to his lap. Bakugou was slowly, sluggishly removing himself from underneath the kotatsu while climbing Todoroki’s torso. The noise had most likely forced him out of his warmth cave. “You wake now, Katsuki? Happy Ne-”

“Happy New Year…” mumbled Bakugou after cutting his boyfriend off with a quick kiss on his lips. He then flopped down, wigging his body back inside of the kotatsu while nestling his head on Todoroki’s lap as comfortably as possible. In a matter of seconds, Bakugou was deep asleep once again.

“You could have at least let me finish,” sighed Todoroki as a small chide. His expression was anything but angry, however. He was completely on cloud nine, happily ruffling Bakugou’s hair with gentle, tender motions to not disturb his sleep too much.

“You know what? I’m gonna give my girlfriend a call once again,” said Natsuo after releasing a soft snort and rolling his eyes around just the slightest.

Fuyumi only giggled as she observed the oldest brother grudgingly leaving the warmth of the kotatsu to have some privacy outside of that love nest, and the youngest brother enjoying said love nest to his heart’s content. Haa, to be young and in love, she thought in the back of her mind.

A couple of minutes after the clock struck midnight, it was Todoroki’s turn to feel his cell phone buzzing and beeping non-stop. He took the electronic device out of his pocket and readily muted it, though there was little that he could regarding the endless notifications coming from the messaging app.

Oh, right. We had all agreed to exchange New Year’s greetings and photos

through the group chat, inwardly recalled Todoroki as soon as he opened the app and saw a very silly photo featuring Kaminari and what seemed to be a Happy New Year neon sign being powered by his electricity Quirk. He looked from his cell phone's screen down to the sleeping blonde, then back to his cell phone once again, now featuring Asui and her family enjoying themselves in the kotatsu, all of them dressed in countless layers of clothes and blankets to fight off their amphibian instincts. *Well, we had **all** agreed to do it so he can't get angry at me for this one.*

Todoroki lifted his cell phone above his head and, after positioning the front camera in the most optimal angle, snapped a photo of himself and the sleeping koala holding his lap hostage.

A couple of seconds later, the group chat was going bonkers, as it was to be expected.

[Sero] And the lovey-dovey couple starts the year with a bang (lol)
[Hagakure] Kyaaah! So jelly~ I wanna get a lap pillow first thing in the year too~
[Mineta] My lap's open and looking for applicants
[Mineta] Just in case you're wondering >.>
[Hagakure] No one's wondering
[Asui] No one's wondering about that, Mineta-chan
[Ashido] At least not about you (lol)
[Midoriya] Todoroki-kun, please stop trying to get us all killed… Kacchan's going to hunt all of us down to erase this photo from this world...
[Iida] We had all agreed to exchange photos so I can't think of a single reason why Bakugou-kun would get angry at us this time around.
[Midoriya] Not when Kacchan's photo is of him sleeping OTL
[Kaminari] RIP Class 1-A all over again…
-- Kirishima has sent a photo --
[Kirishima] Happy New Year, guys!!
[Kirishima] Damn, I didn't know you two were going to celebrate New Year's with another couple trip!
[Ashido] Oh, yeah! Now that you mention it! O.O
[Kaminari] Where did the wonder couple go this time~?

[Todoroki] My house

The group chat quietened down completely for several seconds. It was for such an abnormally long period of time for a group chat that had been going so strong with quick replies that Todoroki wondered if his internet connection or the app itself had crashed down. But it was just his classmates processing the bombastic news and everything that it entailed.

[Kirishima] YOUR WHAT!?
[Kaminari] Your house means Endeavor's house, right? That's what it means, isn't it? SOMEONE PLEASE TELL ME THAT I'M WRONG!!!
[Yaoyorozu] Is everyone okay?
[Sero] Holy shit, you really started the year with one hell of a bang!
[Asui] I highly doubt those currently living under the same roof as Bakugou-chan and Endeavor are okay, Yaomomo-chan
[Uraraka] Todoroki-kun, please elaborate a bit more!
[Tokoyami] Yes, this is something we need to know more to begin any and all countermeasures to the storm brewing in the distance

They're all blowing this out of proportion, inwardly sighed Todoroki, his eyes expressionlessly staring at the cell phone's screen as more and more requests for info were sent. Then again, their worry wasn't that big of a surprise. Most of their classmates loved to poke fun at Bakugou and were always up to squeeze some juicy details out of his romantic relationship with Todoroki, but all of them wholeheartedly cared for both of them. They knew Bakugou's explosive personality very well and they knew that pro hero Endeavor would never be a good match to him, not to mention the bad relationship Todoroki already shared with him even without any powder keg around.

So of course they'd worry when suddenly told that Bakugou was currently sleeping inside Endeavor's house.

[Todoroki] It was a bit tense at the start but everything's fine now
[Kaminari] How many rooms were burned down?

[Todoroki] None
[Sero] What about collateral damage? Like, tables and chairs and plates and whatever else was at hand
[Todoroki] None
[Ashido] Then what about wounds? Your face looked kinda weird in the photo
[Todoroki] That was my fault, I guess
[Uraraka] Your fault how!?
[Todoroki] I bit Katsuki in the wrong place so he got back at me by biting my face

Another long pause on incoming messages ensued.

[Kirishima] So that means… Endeavor was defeated?
[Todoroki] Yes
[Kaminari] WTF!? HOW???
[Midoriya] I have the feeling I know what's about to come…
[Todoroki] The power of our love is unbeatable
[Midoriya] Told you so…
[Jirou] I can perfectly picture Todoroki saying that in my mind, voice included
[Ashido] Same
[Jirou] The fact he means it only makes it all the more embarrassing
[Asui] The embarrassment probably comes from the fact that it's true
[Todoroki] Thanks
[Uraraka] I don't think Tsuyu-chan meant that as a compliment, Todoroki-kun…
[Asui] It was a compliment
[Asui] How many times have they nearly killed us all?
[Asui] 'Unbeatable' is the only way to describe it
[Asui] Even Aizawa-sensei and All Might have said so
[Kirishima] Say no more, Tsuyu-chan… Say no more…

"Ngh… Stop stalling… Let's go back to your room…" groaned Bakugou with a sleepy, rough voice. He rolled his body to the opposite side and gave a couple of small tugs to Todoroki's upper clothes. "Wanna sleep on a futon… Not on the kotatsu…"

“Yeah, let’s go to bed,” chuckled Todoroki, helping Bakugou out of his kotatsu hideout with one hand while quickly writing one final message to the group chat with the other.

[Todoroki] Katsuki is asking to go to sleep
[Todoroki] Good night
[Midoriya] Oh! Have a good night, Todoroki-kun!
[Uraraka] Night, night!
[Iida] Enjoy yourselves during the first shrine visit of the year. But no weird adventures.
[Kirishima] Tell Bakugou ‘Happy New Year’ for us!
[Todoroki] No
[Kirishima] Aww…
[Ojiro] Is no one going to comment on the fact that Todoroki is calling Bakugou by his first name? No? Okay…

“You want me to carry you to bed?” inquired Todoroki, stuffing his cell phone back inside his pocket while he got up from the kotatsu. He waved goodbye at Fuyumi as he walked next to a sleepy, wobbly Bakugou.

“You think I’m a baby or some shit…?” grumbled Bakugou, lazily rubbing one of his eyes as he dragged his feet down the corridor.

“You were sleeping like one just a couple of minutes ago,” pointed out Todoroki, softly chuckling to himself. Now that he thought about it, hadn’t Bakugou previously fallen asleep on his lap too while they and their classmates were watching a movie? Without even noticing, he blurted out, “Do you like using my lap as a pillow that much?”

“It’s better than an empty bed…” confessed Bakugou as he stifled a yawn. His hand hit his face when his body was suddenly tightly hugged by Todoroki, the momentum only stopping when they came crashing against the nearest wall. “Ouch!! What was that for!?”

“You’re the cutest koala in the whole world,” declared Todoroki with the overdramatic effect that only an expressionless, dense human being could ever pull off. He lunged his head forward right away but the kiss was as tender and soft as light snow falling on the petals of a daffodil. “Happy New Year, Katsuki.”

“…Happy New Year again, Shouto…” mumbled Bakugou under his breath, his arms closing around Todoroki’s neck to pull him into one more kiss.

Chapter 79

“Hey. Wake up,” called Bakugou, body crouched down next to the futon as he tapped his hand a couple of times on Todoroki’s chest, gently inflating and deflating as he peacefully slept. “Hey, Todo- Tsk… Shouto, wake up!”

“Nnnn…” groggily mumbled Todoroki, his body stirring and rolling on the futon just the slightest. Once that was done, he went back to total silence, total motionlessness.

“I said wake up, damn it!!” roared Bakugou, a vein nearly bursting on his forehead. He yanked the pillow from underneath Todoroki’s head and stuffed it on his face, where he pressed down until Todoroki was fidgeting all over and fighting against the suffocating softness. Once satisfied with the results and only after making sure that Todoroki was wide awake, Bakugou pulled the pillow away from his lover’s face and dropped it on the tatami floor. “Awake now?”

“Haa…! Haa! W-What did I… haa… do wrong this time…?” gasped Todoroki, wheezing and puffing non-stop to suck in as much oxygen to his starved lungs as possible. He used his arms to push his upper body slightly up and, as soon as he did so, two hands dragged the hem of his shirt and started undressing him. It went without saying that Todoroki was feeling completely lost and confused right now. “Huh? Katsuki?”

“Stop daydreaming and get changed ASAP! We don’t have a lot of time!” ordered Bakugou, smoothly getting Todoroki’s upper body stark naked in a matter of seconds. He threw a few clothes at him and urged him to hurry up once again by poking his leg with his foot. “If you don’t get changed in less than five minutes, I’m killing you on the spot!”

“What’s going on?” inquired Todoroki, obediently doing as told. He fully exited the futon and took the rest of his sleepwear off, quickly replacing his nakedness for the clothes Bakugou had thrown at him. As he did so, he noticed that his bedroom was still completely dark, save for the gentle light of the street lamps that seeped inside through the window. “Wait, what time is it?”

“6 AM,” nonchalantly said Bakugou as he leisurely folded the futon and pushed it back to the corner of the room.

“Why are we waking up at 6 AM today?” deadpanned Todoroki, blankly following Bakugou around the room with his gaze. “The sun hasn’t even risen ye- Ah.”

“My point exactly,” grumbled Bakugou under his breath, catching Todoroki by the back of the collar of his clothes on his way towards the bedroom’s sliding door. He dragged him out into the corridor, then up the stairs to the 2nd floor, only stopping once they were in front of the windows that overlooked the estate’s inner garden area. Bakugou slid one of the windows wide open. The cold wind that invaded the insides of the Japanese-style house made his body shiver from head to toes. “Tsk, it sure is cold…”

“What are you doi- Katsuki!” inquired Todoroki with a confused tilt of his head. But the moment he saw Bakugou starting to climb the window and go outside through the 2nd floor, he immediately grabbed him by the waist and ripped him away from the window. He deadpanned amidst furious growls and wiggling arms and legs, “How about an explanation first?”

“We’re going to the roof to watch the sunrise! Now let go of me and get your ass out there or we’ll be too late and miss the god damned show!” hissed Bakugou, hitting the side of Todoroki’s torso again and again with his elbow in hopes of freeing himself.

“Oh. Why didn’t you say that from the very start?” said Todoroki, readily releasing Bakugou’s waist… and inadvertently dropping him on the floor out of sheer excitement for that new experience. A pair of tear-stained red eyes glared at him from below, teeth silently grinding and gnawing against one another in irritation. “Sorry…”

“I’m going back to bed,” grudgingly grumbled Bakugou, picking himself up from the floor and immediately initiating a beeline towards the stairs.

“No, let’s go see the sunrise,” deadpanned Todoroki, once again looping his arm around Bakugou’s waist to be able to drag him back to the open window. “It was my fault for dropping you on the floor again. The sun has nothing to do with it.”

“I’ll push you down from the rooftop then…” mumbled Bakugou under his breath as he let himself be pulled and guided by Todoroki back to the same spot he had been yanked away from a couple of seconds ago. “I’d totally be able to use the sun as an excuse for a murder attempt…”

Despite all of Bakugou’s moaning and grumbling, both of them managed to safely climb their way to the rooftop and find a seemingly comfortable and not overly cold sitting position there. Todoroki’s thermal functions warmly shone amidst the dark ambience around them, to make sure neither of them turned into a popsicle nor caught a cold on the first day of the year.

“Why did you suddenly feel like seeing the sunrise?” inquired Todoroki, gently nudging his arm on Bakugou to urge him even closer. Their bodies were already sticking extremely close to one another but there was never close enough, at least not to the point that their proximity had ever quenched all of Todoroki’s greediness. “Last night, you couldn’t even stay awake for the New Year’s countdown. I thought you were going to stay in bed the whole morning.”

“Meh, I’m not that big of a fan of that idiotic countdown,” said Bakugou with a shrug of his shoulders. He released a steamy cloud of hot breath into his hands and, without much thought into it, stuffed them inside of Todoroki’s clothes once he realised that just rubbing them against one another wasn’t doing much to fight off the cold. “Why do I hafta celebrate the last of something? I’d rather use and abuse all firsts that are shoved my way.”

“That’s very much like you,” chuckled Todoroki, his eyes moving up and down from the hands creeping into his clothes and groping at his torso and the neutral expression on Bakugou’s face. He tilted his head and asked, “Is this supposed to be an invitation or am I reading too much into it?”

“You think I’m into fucking in the middle of this freakin’ cold!?” hissed Bakugou, taking a good hold of skin and flesh with his fingers so he could pinch the living daylights out of his dumbass boyfriend.

“First time having sex on a roof?” pointed out Todoroki, his brain quickly connecting the dots to that possibility since they had been on the topic of first experiences.

“How about first time breaking your neck after falling off a roof, huh?” barked back Bakugou, immediately yanking his hands away from Todoroki’s warmth. He crossed his arms over his chest and stuffed his hands underneath his armpits to preserve whatever heat he managed to steal away. “You’re always with your mind in the gutter lately, aren’t you…? We should start cutting down on the sex again, it might make you go back from monkey-brained to just the same moron of always…”

“That’s fine by me, I can wait until you feel like jumping me again,” deadpanned Todoroki, his face truly void of expression as he sneaked his hands in between Bakugou’s crossed arms and pulled his hands

back inside his clothes. “How long until the sunrise?”

“Any second now…” grumbled Bakugou under his breath. He could say the pink tinge on his cheekbones was a byproduct of the cold morning air hitting their faces but we all know where that blush was coming from. If Todoroki continued dropping lines like those ones, forget about a few days, he’d jump him in a few hours. Maybe in a matter of seconds, actually…

Luckily for him, a superior power came to cockblock any further misadventures on the rooftop. The sun finally started peeking out on the faraway horizon, from in between houses and buildings, to spread its first rays of soft sunshine of the year in that portion of the world.

“Katsuki, what are your plans for this year?” inquired Todoroki, his eyes squinted as he observed an orange brightness slowly dyeing the dark blue sky and turning into a gentle, still very watered down light blue. His breath came out as a white cloud of condensation, partially hiding that blue hue as real clouds would have.

“Huh?” interjected Bakugou, quickly turning his head sideways to stare inquisitively at Todoroki. “Isn’t it more than obvious? I’m gonna be the best. I’m gonna claim my indisputable 1st place during our 2nd sports festival, which means I’m gonna beat you black and blue on national television all over again and you can bet your sorry ass that I’m fuckin’ breaking up with you if you do the same shit you did last year. Heck, I’m gonna slaughter anyone that dares to get in my way to my reign of absolute supremacy! I’m gonna work my ass off during summer training camp and get my blasts strong enough to blow up with an entire city. ...And maybe let myself get dragged to the beach or the pool by you… Then I’m gonna fuckin’ destroy the school festival, if I’m in a good mood at that time of the year and those idiots don’t scheme about capitalising my damn boyfriend for their own gain all over again. I’m gonna steal Best Jeanist’s hero agency from him and beat him fair and square during my internship there. Hah, others won’t even know who’s the real boss around there anymore! I’m gonna milk that annoying slob from at least a couple hundred thousand to finance our dates during our days off. And I’m totally

aiming for a perfect date sometime this year because even if things have been solved for the better lately, I just want to enjoy our dates in total peace of mind, without having to worry about when the next disastrous incident will happen! ...What about you?"

"Anything will do for as long as I'm with you," said Todoroki, his lips promptly curling up into a smile. The orange of the rising sun was nothing compared to the brightness sitting next to him, his hands stuffed inside of his clothes for warming up purposes. Starting the year with the knowledge that he had been included in pretty much all of Bakugou's future plans, directly or indirectly, filled him up with a mysterious feeling, something that he couldn't accurately describe but that far surpassed regular happiness.

"...Aren't you a smooth one…" grumbled Bakugou under his breath, his face scrunched up into a frown to keep the growing heat on his cheeks sealed away. He wrapped his hands with the fabric of Todoroki's clothes and pulled him closer. Close enough for his head to not need to move much to deliver a quick kiss to his lips. He then quickly pulled back, snatching his hands out of Todoroki's clothes so he could turn his body around. He mumbled, "Stop seducing me, damn it… I already said we are not getting it on in this cold…"

"I wasn't sedu-"

"Anyways! We got a lot of other shit to do and the day only has 24 hours, 6 of which have already ticked by so let's get a move on already!!" yelped Bakugou, jumping to a standing position out of the blue. He stomped so resolutely to the edge of the roof, he almost seemed to be getting ready to jump out of there. Bakugou did, however, come to a stop as soon as his foot touched the last tile and leisurely sat down there, aiming to go back inside of the house through the same window they had used to get outside. He turned his head to Todoroki and snapped back, "Stop dilly-dallying over there! I just said we've got shit to do, didn't I!?"

“Yeah, yeah,” said Todoroki amidst a couple of chuckles. Shy, embarrassed Bakugou was always such a great sight, especially when it happened by accident. Todoroki leisurely got up, gave one last good look at the still-rising sun and walked towards Bakugou. Yes, he definitely preferred whatever weird adventures Bakugou had in stock for them to that awe-inspiring early morning view. A couple of months ago, it would have been the other way around. A year earlier, he would have never considered watching the first sunrise of the year. Todoroki had changed and grown up quite a lot since he became a high school student at U.A., hadn’t he? He was immensely grateful for that, be it to Bakugou, to Midoriya, to all of his classmates and, most of all, to his unexpectedly slowly reuniting family. Todoroki, much like Bakugou had, sat down on the edge of the roof and, with his head tilted to the left, inquired, “What’s next, Bakugou?”

“The shrine visit, obviously,” scoffed Bakugou with a small roll of his eyes. He dipped his body towards the gaping height between them and the floor and, with nearly gymnastic moves, hopped through the window and neatly landed on the wooden corridor. Bakugou threw Todoroki a peek from below and urged him to follow along. “I ain’t gonna waste my time waiting in those humongous lines. Better go early, preferably right this moment. So hurry it up.”

“What about breakfast?” asked Todoroki, once again going through the same motions as Bakugou had, albeit a bit more slowly and clumsily.

“Ugh… Preferably right after having breakfast…” grumbled Bakugou under his breath, a small pink blush once again blossoming in his frowning demeanour.

He wouldn’t be caught dead admitting it but he had been so excited with the idea of his first New Year’s shrine visit with Todoroki that he had completely forgotten about food and his growling, hungry stomach.

Chapter 80

“I’ve never seen a shrine so empty during New Year’s,” noted Todoroki, his heterochromatic eyes blankly staring at the stone stairs before him - at the completely empty stone stairs, save for some shrine workers busily giving the final touches around that location to safely and warmly welcome all visitors.

“There are all sorts of perks about being the first,” smugly snorted Bakugou, quite satisfied with the result they had obtained. He already expected the shrine to have very few people, be it due to its location, the number of stairs that had to be climbed to reach it and the deity it represented itself, but he wasn’t quite counting on it still being absolutely void of visitors. He shrugged his shoulders and gestured towards the stone stairs with a jerk of his chin. “Let’s hurry up. We have quite the climb before us.”

“I bet whoever decided to build this shrine here was a climber like you,” deadpanned Todoroki with an inward sigh. Personally, he felt that those were way too many stairs to climb so early in the morning but just the sight of them was probably teasing and exciting his lover’s desire to reach the summit. That had been what made him take that first step and begin the ascension to the top. “By the way, which shrine is this one?”

“.....Fukurokuju’s…” mumbled Bakugou under his breath, his cold cheekbones flaring up in red even further. He adjusted the scarf around his neck and placed it a bit more over his face to hide his blush.

“Pffft!” laughed Todoroki despite himself, which earned him a raging side glare from Bakugou and a metaphorical cloud of dust as he accelerated his stomping climbing motions to sulkily widen the distance between them. He had been thinking that the shrine Bakugou had chosen was one dedicated to a god related to war, wealth or success, as one would expect out of Class 1-A’s prideful, battle-hungry

powder keg. Todoroki would have never guessed he'd take him to a shrine dedicated to a god of luck, longevity and happiness. He hastened his climbing and shortened the distance between them once again, to the point his shoulder softly bumped into Bakugou. Todoroki didn't even have to think twice before tightly holding his cold hand. "You really weren't joking when you said you were aiming for a perfect date somewhere throughout this year."

"Shut up…" grumbled Bakugou, once again snuggling his scarf closer to his face. "I always keep my word... "

That you do, inwardly chuckled Todoroki, the corner of his lips curling up into a gentle smile. He could feel his heart thumping like crazy inside his chest and it got him wondering, was Bakugou also able to feel that lovestruck heartbeat soaring inside of him through their entwining fingers? *I now know what will be my prayer for this year.*

After several minutes of climbing the endless stone stairs, Todoroki and Bakugou reached the top of the small mountain and were finally bestowed with a view of the small shrine complex. Unlike during the climb, there were a couple of visitors mixed together with the shrine workers and shrine maidens, perhaps family members that had decided to offer the shrine some manual labour alongside the usual monetary donations.

The shrine grounds were proportional to the small mountain's size and very, very disproportionate to the stair's length. The stone path that linked the top of the stairs to the main hall couldn't be more than 50 meters and the adjacent buildings and structures, like the water purification pavilion, the administrative office and the ema board, were all cramped up close to it, only separated by neatly spaced stone lanterns. It had a very simple, rustic design for a shrine placed close by to such a large city.

They didn't dwindle around the water pavilion for too long, as the prospect of the icy cold water was scurrying Bakugou away like the

devil from the cross. And with no lines before them, they quickly reached the main hall where the deity had been enshrined so they could get their prayers done. The first shrine visit of the year, which usually lasted an entire morning, sometimes even consuming a portion of the afternoon in the biggest, most famous shrines, was accomplished in a matter of half an hour, endless stairs included.

Since they had successfully completed their mission there - one that hopefully would allow them to have an entire year of trouble-free dates and outings - Todoroki suggested that they should take a small break by the administrative office to draw their fortune for the year. Neither he nor Bakugou said no when one of the Miko shrine maidens offered them some warm amazake alongside their fortune-telling paper strips.

“Ugh… You gotta be kidding me…” groaned Bakugou in utter exasperation, both his shoulders and head dropping just the slightest as he saw ‘very bad luck’ written in two big characters at the top of the paper slip. His exasperation soon morphed into angry frustration and the piece of paper was noisily crushed in between his hands. “Fuck this shit…! I come here for good luck and they give me *this* !? What god of luck, happiness and whatever other crap it is! I ain’t coming back here ever again! Hmph!”

“Don’t worry, Katsuki. I’ll make sure that my good luck fully counters your bad luck,” reassured Todoroki, offering a quick thumbs up at his lover. He finished drinking his amazake and proceeded with checking the results of his fortune-telling paper slip. Todoroki silently read everything that was written on the small piece of paper and then turned his head towards Bakugou, his face as expressionless and blank as a pile of snow. “Sorry. I got ‘very bad luck’ too…”

“I shouldn’t have come here with you!!!!” screeched Bakugou, his teeth noisily biting and chewing on the rim of his plastic cup as he creased and crumpled his paper slip even further with his free hand. “It’s always the same thing whenever we go somewhere together! Just what the hell!? Aaaargh! This pisses me off!!”

“Well, our disastrous dates are fun too so it should be fine,” said Todoroki with a small shrug of his shoulders. His cool-headed personality made it easy for him to swallow that bitter fortune but Bakugou was still gnawing on the subject like a starved hellhound. With a small chuckle, Todoroki pulled the plastic cup-slash-stress reliever away from him and replaced it with a tender peck on his lips. “We’re the strongest when we’re together. Our dates will be okay, Katsuki. Even if one of us gets kidnapped or we end up being teleported to the other side of the world or we get stuck inside another maddening dungeon, we’ll be fine.”

“I know that!” softly barked back Bakugou, his whole face scrunching up into a frown to hide his flusteredness. How could Todoroki do something so embarrassing so openly in the middle of a shrine? They’d be totally caught if he flirted this unabashedly, wouldn’t they? Bakugou’s ears were nearly erupting with clouds of steam yet they could still hear a couple of giggling voices coming from behind them. Yup, the shrine maidens currently tending to the administrative office had totally seen them just now!! He so wanted to chew his lover’s head off with the usual admonishments but… Todoroki seemed too happy and proud about what he had just said for that. *Ugh… I’ll yell at him plenty once we’re on our way back to his house…* “Oh, right. There’s that thing too.”

“Hm? Is there something we still haven’t done here at the shrine?” inquired Todoroki, his head slightly tilted to the left at those softly spoken words. As far as he was aware, and according to all of his previous shrine visits during New Year’s, they had already done everything they were supposed to do.

“Nah, not here,” snorted Bakugou with a small roll of his eyes. That was as much as he could say for a good couple of seconds. Damn it, how could Todoroki be so blunt all the time yet he couldn’t even say a simple sentence without getting the words stuck in his throat? Heck, he couldn’t even look straight at Todoroki right now! Not knowing what he was supposed to do with his fidgeting hands, Bakugou yanked his plastic cup away from Todoroki’s grasp and led the lukewarm

beverage closer to his lips. “Ah… Do you… Err… Do you want… to go to my place?”

“Yes!” promptly said Todoroki, his mismatched eyes, the small smile on his lips, his whole body radiating with sparkly, shiny excitement.

“D-D-Don’t just say ‘yes’ right away, damn it!!” sputtered Bakugou, his entire face finally exploding into a myriad of shades of red. “Act a little bit surprised at least! Or just, like, I don’t know, process the whole thing for a couple of seconds before saying ‘yes’ or something!”

“But didn’t you tell me that I could go visit your house any time I wanted before I left the dorm for winter vacation?” pointed out Todoroki, an eyebrow slightly arched on his brows as he observed that endearing blush. At this point, Bakugou’s face was probably as red as his ruby-coloured eyes.

“.....”

It seemed that Bakugou had accidentally shot himself on the foot... yet again.

Chapter 81

“Shit, it just had to start freaking snowing again!” cursed Bakugou, furiously ruffling his hair to get rid of the melting, accumulated snowflakes on top of his head as he unlocked the front door to his house. “The damned prophesied bad luck is already striking and it’s only the first day of the year! God damn it, I hate this fuckin’ rotten luck I have whenever I’m outside with you!!”

“It’s just a little bit of snow, it’s not as bad as-” pointed out Todoroki, coming inside the entrance area right behind Bakugou at the same time he shook some bits of snow from his shoulders and head. A furious growl, even louder than Bakugou’s complaining, quickly shut him up.

“KATSUKI! What was it that I told you to do!?” yelled Mitsuki, angrily stomping her slippers-clad feet on the wooden floor. The thundering footsteps kept growing closer and closer to the entrance area until a slender blonde woman appeared within their sight. Mitsuki made a direct beeline to her son, who she grabbed and yanked by one of his ears. “C’mon, I know you and your smart little brain remembers my words perfectly clearly. What was it that we agreed on? Huh!?”

“So what if I didn’t call you before coming here!?” roared Bakugou back, quickly slapping his mother’s hand out of his throbbing earlobe. “This is my house too! I can come back anytime I feel like without asking for your permission first! Hmph!”

“It’s not a matter of asking for our permission or not, you moron! New Year's is a busy time even if your father and I are on holidays, you forgetful idiot!” admonished Mitsuki, shaking her head in dissatisfaction and disappointment, one of her feet impatiently tapping on the floor. “If you just show up here whenever you feel like, there’s a bigger probability of us being out and about than at home!”

“You’re home right now, aren’t you!? So who cares if I called beforehand or not? Geez, way to make a storm in a glass of water…” groaned Bakugou with an annoyed roll of his eyes. He crossed his arms over his chest and looked his mother dead in the eyes. “Can we come in or not? Because whether you say yes or kick us out, I’m bulldozing my way to my room to wrap myself in some goddamned blankets!”

“We’re in the living room having breakfast,” sighed Mitsuki, signalising her permission for them to come in with a small jerk of her chin. She started walking deeper inside of the house and stopped in front of the door that would lead them into the living room area. “Have you eaten breakfast already or do you want me to make you something?”

“We already ate but I sure could use a cup of something warm,” said Bakugou, leisurely following his mother. It was almost as if that sudden bout of arguing hadn’t just happened - maybe because it was such a normal, everyday occurrence in that household that it couldn’t even be called arguing, just a very loud and rough way of communication. Even though the house was considerably warm, a shiver still crawled up his spine. “Damn, I'm gonna go grab a blanket from my room. Be right back.”

“Ah…” Todoroki was about to call Bakugou to ask him what exactly he was supposed to do but the slippery koala darted up the nearby stairs faster than he could start speaking. But really, what exactly was he supposed to do? Follow Bakugou to his bedroom? Follow Bakugou’s mother to the living room? Neither school nor his interactions with family and friends had prepared him for a dilemma like this one so Todoroki did what he supposed everyone else would have done in an unfamiliar situation - he walked inside of the only division of the house he was familiarised with, the living room.

“Take a seat wherever you want,” said Mitsuki, gesturing towards the sofas before she turned her back on him and moved to the kitchen. The boy had quite the expressionless face on him so it was difficult for her to gauge what exactly was going through his head at the moment.

He was probably feeling completely lost, as it would usually happen to those that were invited for the first time to the Bakugou residence.

“Okay,” acknowledged Todoroki, not shying away in the slightest about taking a seat in the exact same sofa he had sat on during his last visit. Only after he had sat down and started looking around the room once again did he notice that he wasn’t alone in that division after all. A bespectacled man was sitting at the dining table, a newspaper opened next to him on the table as he silently stared at Todoroki, a surprised expression lightly shaped on his face. Todoroki softly bowed his head and greeted him. “Good morning.”

“Ah. Yes. Good morning,” said Masaru, his voice hinted some flusteredness as he hurriedly closed and folded the newspaper. Once that was done, he turned his sitting position slightly sideways so he could better face the unexpected visit. “I’m Katsuki’s father, Bakugou Masaru.”

“Todoroki Shouto,” also introduced himself Todoroki with a small nod of his head. It seemed in the Bakugou family, the role of shouting father had been switched to shouting mother. Todoroki could now fully understand why Midoriya had mentioned that Bakugou was very similar to his mother, in several different ways but mostly personality-wise, even though he had only just met his parents. “I’m Katsuki’s-”

“Seriously... Katsuki, that rascal, never changes,” sighed Mitsuki, inadvertently interrupting Todoroki for the second time with her return to the living room. She settled two cups of steaming hot milk tea in the short table in front of the sofas and returned to the dining table so she could resume her half-eaten breakfast. Her gaze nevertheless was stuck on the expressionless young man sitting by himself on the sofa. “Sorry about that earlier. Katsuki never listens to what I tell him so I need to remind him that he has ears for a reason now and then. I’m Bakugou Mitsuki, that wannabe delinquent’s mother.”

“I can see that,” deadpanned Todoroki. The more he heard Mitsuki talking, the more similar she seemed to Bakugou. He couldn’t help but think yet again that genetics were a truly frightening thing. On the other hand, his father seemed to have a much tamer and meeker personality, one that was on the total opposite spectrum of his lover’s constant explosiveness. Bakugou’s family was almost like a complete 180 to Todoroki’s family, with several roles inverted or misplaced somewhere else. For Todoroki, it was a very striking family situation to observe, even if his facial expression didn’t hint at any sort of surprise or shock. Nevertheless, he had to finish his introduction to them. First meetings were crucial, right? And he was currently meeting his lover’s parents. Todoroki had to give it his best like never before. “I’m Todoroki Shouto. I’m Katsuki’s-”

“I’m away for a couple of minutes and you all immediately start talking smack about me behind my back?” scoffed Bakugou, a small frown on his brows as he stepped inside of the living room. He had removed his jacket, which had gotten slightly moist due to the snowfall, and replaced it with a small blanket, which he had wrapped around his shoulders and was gently falling over his back like a cape would have. He leisurely threw his body down on the sofa, next to Todoroki, and placed a sports towel over his head so he could dry himself too if needed. Bakugou wasn’t quite expecting to be greeted back with a blank demeanour. “What?”

“No, it’s nothing,” deadpanned Todoroki, only inwardly sighing as he removed the towel from the top of his head. That had been the third interruption in a row - something that he hadn’t been the only one noticing.

“Katsuki, stop interrupting people when they’re trying to speak!” admonished Mitsuki with a disapproving sideways glance. “You’re being rude!”

“Shut up! You’re the last person I want to hear that from!!” barked back Bakugou, turning his head to the other side with a smug ‘hmph’. He grabbed the cup of milk tea and let it rest in between his hands for a while, using it as fuel to heat his body outwardly before he got down

to doing it inwardly. “You’re constantly cutting people off with your bitching!”

“Now, now. Calm down,” tried Masaru, a strained soft smile on his lips as he looked at both his wife and his son. “Now is not the right moment to fi-”

“The hell it isn’t! Buzz off!” roared Bakugou and Mitsuki at the same time, in nearly perfect synchrony.

“O-Okay…” stammered Masaru, meekly turning his gaze to his breakfast so as to hurriedly shove another piece of toast in his mouth.

Knowing Katsuki, this is actually kind of funny to watch, inwardly noted Todoroki, starting to relax a little bit more now that he had come to realise that this was simply how their family dynamic worked. Shouting Bakugou has long become a normalised everyday event in his life, seeing it also happening in his house was beyond reassuring.

“Ugh, just ignore those two,” groaned Bakugou with an annoyed roll of his eyes. He led the cup closer to his lips and softly sipped on the piping hot milk tea. “You were saying?”

“I was just introducing myself to your parents,” said Todoroki, his head tilted to the left. So had Bakugou said but he couldn’t ignore the people he was trying to talk with, now could he? Todoroki shifted his sitting position on the sofa slightly and faced the dining table. He better strike fast and while the iron was hot or he might end up failing yet again. “I’m Todoroki Shouto. I’m Katsuki’s boyfriend and we’re dating with the intention of getting married in the future. I look forward to becoming a part of your family.”

“PFFFFFT! COUGH! YOU- HAA! COUGH!” Bakugou choked on the hot

beverage like he had never before in his whole life. He was so stupefied by what Todoroki had just loudly declared while right in front of his goddamned parents that he could barely figure out if he should choke Todoroki to death too, wipe his mouth and upper body clean from the spilt milk tea or place the cup being held by his trembling hands down on the table first. Hence, he attempted to do all three of them at the same time and accomplish none due to his flabbergasted state.

His mother's reaction to the sudden marriage declaration also only made it even worse and harder for Bakugou to regain his bearings.

"Ahahahahahahahaha!!" burst out laughing Mitsuki, one of her hands softly tapping on the table's surface. Her shoulders shook around like an earthquake as her body squirmed around in amusement on her seat. "We're dating with the intention of getting married in the future, he says! Ahahaha! Katsuki, where did you find this one? He sure has guts, that's for sure! Ahahahahaha!"

"H-Honey, I think you're laughing a bit too much…" whispered Masaru, gently rubbing and patting Mitsuki's back to help her calm down a little bit. It didn't seem to be helping much, though.

"Did I say something wrong?" inquired Todoroki, his head slightly tilted to the left once again as his gaze jumped from the table to the wheezing blushing mess sitting next to him. He had asked that in all earnestness but the laughter coming from the table rose up another level rather than slow down.

Only after close to twenty minutes was regular conversation restored in the Bakugou residence.

"You know, I've always wondered what kind of person you'd end up dating," started Mitsuki, some giggles and chuckles nearly spilling out

of her lips now and then. She and Masaru had moved from the dining table to the sofas, so it would be easier to continue the conversation after such an icebreaking moment. Mitsuki gave a small shrug with her shoulders and softly snorted. “I mean, you’re brash, egocentric, with a superiority complex shooting higher than the moon and a knack for getting in trouble at any given moment. Who would want to date such a pain in the ass, am I right?”

“Hey!” hissed Bakugou, promptly turning his blazing glaring eyes at his mother.

“So I was starting to warm up to the idea of you staying single and lonely for the rest of your life, which, to be brutally honest here, wouldn’t come as too much of a surprise either,” continued Mitsuki, not mincing her words not even a little bit even though she was falling victim to Bakugou’s half furious, half embarrassed scowling. “But, fortunately, you managed to grow up and mature to the point of falling in love and finding a partner who wants to be with you despite all of your faults. Your father and I are happy for you, Katsuki.”

“Ugh… S-Shut up…” grumbled Bakugou under his breath, his cheekbones blooming into a light shade of pink.

“And, of course, we’re also more than happy to welcome you to our family, Todorori-kun,” added Masaru, offering a gentle smile to both Bakugou and Todoroki. “Or would ‘Shouto-kun’ be more appropriate for the circumstances?”

“I don’t mind if you call me by my first name already,” said Todoroki with his characteristic sparkly expressionlessness. “It’s too confusing to have so many Todorokis or Bakugous in the same room.”

“Confusing maybe for you...” scoffed Bakugou with a small voice, still sulking about the previous naming discussion he and Todoroki had in

the middle of their intimate hours.

“If you’re willing to be tied down to Katsuki for the rest of your life, who am I to stop you?” confessed Mitsuki with a small sigh. Her lips quickly changed to a knowing smirk, one meant with all the good intentions in this world. “I just hope you’re prepared to spend your remaining days being lorded over by Mister I’m-the-Best over there, Shouto.”

“It’s nothing I can’t deal with,” reassured Todoroki, a small smile starting to breach into his stony demeanour. Talking about Bakugou always had that effect on his facial expression as of late. “He might bark a lot but he works even harder. Having him ordering me around now and then is just another part of what makes him cute.”

“Damn it, how many times have I told you to stop calling me cute!?” roared Bakugou, promptly turning his head in Todoroki’s direction and stuffing an elbow on his gut. “Zip it already with that crap or I’ll shut you up the hard way!”

“No, you won’t,” said Todoroki, Mitsuki and even a fretting Masaru at the same time.

“Argh! Why does everyone always gang up on me when we’re in family settings!?” groaned Bakugou, throwing his hands up in the air in frustration. He got up from the sofa and yanked the blanket from around his shoulders, which he threw all crumpled up to the sofa’s backrest. “We’ve stayed here for way too long. It’s time to leave, Shouto!”

“Yeah, yeah,” chuckled Todoroki, also getting up from the sofa to follow after his lover, who was already darting outside of the living room area at the speed of light. “Thank you for the milk tea. It was really good.”

“Yeah, sure,” acknowledged Mitsuki with a dismissive wave of her hand. “Oh, one more thing before you leave with that rascal, Shouto.”

“Yes?” said Todoroki, halting his body once again so he could turn around towards Mitsuki and Masaru, who only now started getting up from their respective sofas.

“Katsuki would probably kick up a fuss about this so keep it a secret from him for the time being,” requested Mitsuki, quickly exchanging a glance with her husband before she continued. “We’ve known about you two for a while now.”

“Eh?” gasped Todoroki in surprise. Bakugou’s parents already knew about them dating? But how exactly had they found out? Todoroki couldn’t picture Bakugou randomly telling his parents about them, giving the type of personality that he had, and it wasn’t as if they had ever met them outside by accident. Or had they…?

“Katsuki used to play nearly every day at a small mountain close by here when he was little,” softly chuckled Mitsuki. “But after having some sort of squabble with Izuku, he never went back there. So colour me surprised when Masaru and I spotted you two walking there while we were on our way out to an extended business trip. Our first thought was that he was just taking a friend there but, I mean, he had plenty of friends in elementary and middle school and he never mentioned going back there even once. Call it mother’s intuition or a woman’s sixth sense or any other thing but we’ve known about you two since that day. I just never said anything to Katsuki because he’s the type that talks about stuff at his own pace. So here’s a freebie as a celebration for that moron finally having gained the balls to bring you here to meet us. Katsuki’s the kind of perfectionist that only makes a move or says or does something once he’s absolutely sure of his success at it. He might not say it directly but he’s dead set in being with you in the long run.”

“Yes, that’s another adorable side of him that I absolutely love,” confessed Todoroki, his expressionlessness instantly evaporating and getting replaced by a heart-warming smile. “Katsuki won’t be alone ever again. You don’t have to worry about that anymore.”

“Is that so? Well, that’s very reassuring to hear,” scoffed Mitsuki as she walked closer to Todoroki. She slapped his shoulder a couple of times and added. “While you’re at it, make sure you keep him out of trouble too. Only god knows what kind of problems he might get himself involved in next if we leave him to his own devices for too long.”

“That might be a bit of a challenge but I’ll try my best,” acknowledged Todoroki with a quick thumbs-up.

“Hey, Shouto! Stop stalling over there!” suddenly yelled Bakugou from the entrance area. “Don’t think I don’t know you’re talking shit about me behind my back again! Get your ass back here right now! It stopped snowing so now’s our chance to go outside without turning into freakin’ popsicles!”

“I’m coming!” yelled Todoroki in response. He looked back to his new extended family and offered them a small bow with his head. “I’ll also try to convince him to come to visit you a bit more frequently.”

“Hah! Good luck with that!” snorted Mitsuki, very doubtful that such a visit would happen any time soon. “Go on now, before he starts screeching his lungs out crying for his boyfriend.”

“Thanks for having me,” said Todoroki as a final goodbye. He gave a short run towards the entrance area and hurriedly put his jacket and shoes on. Bakugou was already all geared up to withstand the frigid temperatures outside, motionless by the door as he silently stared at him. “Okay, we can go now. ...What?”

“Nah, it’s nothing...” mumbled Bakugou under his breath. He gave a small jerk with his chin and pointed at the front door. “Let’s go.”

It might have stopped snowing already and very few mounds of piled snow could be spotted outside, but the air was still as cold as it had been when they arrived. It would certainly begin snowing yet again in a couple of hours. The cloudy sky above them told them such. For Todoroki, someone whose Quirk enabled him to regulate the temperature of his body at will, it was comfortable weather; for Bakugou, who dreaded and despised low temperatures, it was the absolute worst.

“Katsuki, do you want to go on a date?” suggested Todoroki without any warning, slowly shortening the distance between their walking bodies to rustling clothes only. “We’re already outside and we don’t have much to do at my house. So let’s go on a date?”

“Huh? A date?” repeated Bakugou, an eyebrow slightly arched on his brows as he peered sideways at Todoroki and lowered his scarf for easier communication. Todoroki only silently nodded his head in acknowledgement. “Haa… Fine.”

“Where do you want to go?” asked Todoroki, a wave of warmness exploding deep inside of his chest and spreading to every nook and cranny of his body. Something soft, cold gently slid against the back of his hand and Todoroki didn’t think twice about capturing it as his own.

“Anywhere’s fine. You can choose,” said Bakugou with a small shrug of his shoulders. A giggle nearly escaped his mouth due to the ticklish way Todoroki was holding and groping his fingers, probably as revenge for what he had done to him a short seconds ago. He was still a hundred years too early to one-up him, though, so Bakugou countered him by tightly entwining their fingers. “But make it

someplace without hoards of extras waltzing around. Oh, and somewhere we won't risk getting frozen to death. Or getting roped into any weird Quirk incidents."

"Any more requests?" chuckled Todoroki as he gave a masked roll with his eyes. He also successfully smuggled Bakugou's hand into his jacket's pocket.

"I wanna eat something spicy for lunch," snickered Bakugou in pure mischief. He even briefly stuck his tongue out at Todoroki before he partially covered the lower half of his face with his scarf once again.

"Do you mean… actual spicy food or am I missing the point once again?" hesitantly inquired Todoroki for good measure. He already had a long - criminally long, in his honest opinion - record of failing to take a hint, he didn't want to keep on adding to it.

"Actual spicy food, you idiot," laughed Bakugou, jokingly bumping his shoulder against Todoroki's. "We can save that for after the date. Though we also have to prepare that fancy New Year's dinner with your sister afterwards so I'll kill you if you make it so I can't walk straight!"

"I'll try my best…" acknowledged Todoroki, once again with a certain hesitation. This upcoming date had just gotten tricker and tricker the more they talked about it. But that was also part of what made their dates and outings so much fun. Todoroki took his cellphone from his pants' pocket and began browsing for any close-by places that checked all of Bakugou's requirements. "Oh. What do you think about this place?"

"Lemme see… Nah, it's way too close to this shrine over here. It's gonna get packed during lunchtime."

“Hm… Then what about here?”

Todoroki and Bakugou slowly continued to walk down the street with their entwined hands closely snuggled inside of that warm pocket, checking the cellphone back and forth for the ideal dating spot around that area.

Did they eventually settle on a place to visit and eat lunch at? Perhaps they did, perhaps snow got in their way again or perhaps they got involved in yet another crazy adventure thanks to a sudden Quirk incident.

Regardless of the outcome, a photo of their first date of the year eventually found its way to Class 1-A’s group chat.

Chapter 82

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Bakugou furiously groaned and cursed under his breath when he heard the doorbell loudly ringing and echoing inside of the apartment. He dropped the box - more like, threw the box to the floor - and stomped his way to the front door, all while inwardly and outwardly cursing whoever stood on the other side.

“Hey there, Kacchan! We came to help you with the moving~” cheerfully announced Kaminari, his sunglasses slightly pulled down on the bridge of his nose so he could mischievously wink and smirk at Bakugou. Sero stood next to him with the same shit-eating grin on his face, though rather than use a goofy pose, he was simply showcasing a 6 pack of Sapporo beers as if it was a holy grail of some sort. “We also brought you two a housewarming gift~”

“Go away,” growled Bakugou, promptly slamming the door closed - or tried to, at the very least, because both Kaminari and Sero threw themselves at it to prevent it from truly closing.

“No, seriously, Bakugou! We came to help you with the moving!” yelped Sero, pushing the door with all his strength. “Not to get in your way!”

“Yeah, right! Then why the hell are you ringing directly on my doorbell and not on the apartment complex’s entrance downstairs, huh!?” hissed Bakugou, exchanging his pushing on the door from hands to his shoulder and upper arm.

“We wanted to pull a little prank on you so I hacked the auto-lock downstairs! We just wanted to surprise you! Just that!” explained

Kaminari with a panicky voice, his flight instinct starting to nag in the back of his head and telling him to run away and fast. He couldn't quite do it, though, because it would incriminate him even further and then Bakugou would truly come after his head. "Argh! Todoroki! Come save us~!!"

"Uh-huh! Surprise me into thinking about moving somewhere else with even tighter security already!!" growled Bakugou, a vein nearly bursting on his forehead at hearing that cry for help. He suddenly moved away from the door and let it barge open. Both Kaminari and Sero toppled down inside of the apartment's entrance area. With a mischievous chuckle, Bakugou eerily smirked at the sight. "Shouto's not home right now. He's working today. Sucks to be you, huh?"

Kaminari and Sero paled instantly at the sight. A long admonishing session spent in a seiza sitting position awaited them for sure.

"Tsk… You just made me lose half an hour of my precious day off!" grumbled Bakugou as he checked the time on his cellphone's screen. His glaring red eyes peered down at the floor next to the sofa where he was comfortably sitting - two devastated pro heroes could be sighted hanging by a thread there. They probably wouldn't think that it was a good idea to prank them with sudden visits any time soon. Perfect. Bakugou released a small sigh and turned his head in the opposite direction, where several cardboard boxes were neatly piled. "I need those boxes over there on the left taken to the kitchen. Now!"

"I know my way around a kitchen!" declared Sero, promptly picking himself up from the floor. He ran towards the mentioned pile of boxes and picked up two of them, which he readily transported to the open kitchen area next to the living room, no more questions asked.

"Sero, you traitor…!" grudgingly mumbled Kaminari, still trying to get his numb legs to work properly. He meekly, with the smile of an angel, peered up at Bakugou and attempted to curry some favour with the raging demon overlord. "Um… Bakugou-san, what would you like

me to help you with? My body will be at your disposal as soon as I'm able to move again."

"You can help me carry the boxes with the clothes to the bedroom…" grumbled Bakugou after releasing another exasperated sigh. He got up from the sofa and walked up to a different pile of cardboard boxes, not so patiently waiting next to it for Kaminari to stagger his way until there just so he could explain what was what and what went where.

"I got kinda surprised when you said Todoroki is working today," noted Kaminari, carefully carrying two big boxes in front of his chest as he followed after Bakugou. "This is the first time you've taken some actual time off since we graduated. I thought Todoroki would definitely ask for the same days off as you."

"His days off start tomorrow, and then I start working again a day earlier than him," explained Bakugou, using his foot to open the semi-closed door to the master bedroom. "It just somehow ended up going that way, between Best Jeanist's tight schedule and Endeavor's stupid bitching."

"Endeavor again, huh…" awkwardly laughed Kaminari, not commenting on the matter any more than that. Bakugou was already fuming at him for that innocent prank, better not to rub him the wrong way any further by prying too much into that topic. He placed the boxes he was carrying next to the ones Bakugou had taken with him and then finally quickly surveyed the room with his gaze. Kaminari teasingly nudged his elbow on Bakugou's arm, a knowing smirk tugging at the corner of his lips. "Oh-ohh~ I only see one bed~"

"Shut up…" grumbled Bakugou under his breath, promptly slapping Kaminari's elbow away. He turned his back on Kaminari and began the quick process of ripping the tape sealing the cardboard boxes. "It's just the two of us here, why would we need more than one bed…?"

Yes, Bakugou and Todoroki had finally moved in together to their own little nest.

An apartment on the top floor of a well-located apartment complex, big enough to easily accommodate a couple and any guests they'd want to invite over and with the additional privilege of private access to half of the rooftop (which was shared with the only other apartment on the top floor). It was a pretty fancy living setting for two newbie pro heroes with only around 2 years of working experience in their field. Both Bakugou and Todoroki were plenty satisfied with this gem of an apartment but if Bakugou had a bone to pick with it, it would be… that it had come way too freaking late!!

As it was expected of the Top 2, Bakugou and Todoroki slew the remainder of their 1st year of high school and then proceeded with getting the same accomplishments in the last two years of their school life. They graduated with flying colours, with plenty of hands-on experience on the trade thanks to continuous working internships at several different hero agencies and with prospects of officially starting to work at Best Jeanist's agency, for Bakugou, and at Endeavor's agency, for Todoroki.

Much like it had been promised, Todoroki began the talks of moving in with Bakugou as soon as he got his graduation diploma in his hand. Sadly for both of them, they had this big, extremely annoying and vexing setback in their moving together plans. One that went by the name of Todoroki Enji.

'You're too young to permanently move out of my house!' 'You're going to be too busy working as newbie pro heroes, I can assure you won't have the time to look after the house with you two working full-time!' 'Shouto, you're still a minor and while you're a minor, you'll be under my guardianship!' - Enji came up with all sorts of excuses and reasons why Todoroki shouldn't move from the dorm to his own place and instead move from the dorm back to the Todoroki Abode.

It would be an understatement to say that hell broke loose thanks to it.

Both Bakugou and Todoroki fought hard to escape those tight clutches sinking down on their cohabitation options. But it was to no avail. Enji was as pigheaded and stubborn about it as the two of them so they were constantly at a stalemate.

After a month of countless arguments and a couple of matches and competitions without a clear victorious side, Bakugou moved into the Todoroki residence with the intention of annoying and pissing Enji off to the point he kicked them both out of his house. It didn't quite work as planned, for several different reasons.

In the middle of their 2nd year of high school, Rei was officially discharged from the hospital and went to live with her husband and her two oldest children once again. In the middle of their 3rd year of high school, Natsuo got married to his girlfriend and she also moved in, as the house was more than big enough to accommodate all of them living under the same roof. Then came Todoroki after graduation and, a month later, Bakugou.

The house that had remained in tense silence for countless years had suddenly become a bustling epicentre filled with laughing voices, family moments and occasional (aka weekly) fights between Bakugou and Enji.

Plenty had yet to be solved, as the good of the present could hardly erase or fix terrible, traumatising past events.

However, Fuyumi was over the moon that she had finally gotten her family back after so many years of trying to piece them together. Both

Todoroki and Rei were extremely happy about living under the same roof once again and were steadily making up for all the lost years. Natsuo was the one who took the longest to acclimate to all of these changes, but his mother's return to their family house and his supportive relationship with his girlfriend-turned-wife did wonders with helping him slowly, at his own cautious pace, include his father a little bit more in his life. And Enji was also trying his hardest to not ruin any of it once again, by giving them space and temporarily living at his hero agency's dorm, by listening to what they had to tell him, regardless if they were critiques or suggestion, by adjusting his life and opening up space for anyone that wanted to be a part of that household, regardless of who they were or how well he got along with them.

Bakugou wasn't the type of asshole that would shit all over the happiness of so many people for his own selfish reasons, especially of those that were so dear to him. So, grudgingly as it might have been, he eventually conceded to living there with Todoroki until they both turned 20 and became adults in the eyes of the law. Heck, Bakugou even eventually came to realise, thanks to that overly long 2-years stay with his boyfriend's family, that the real reason why Enji had been so against Todoroki moving out in the first place was that he was desperately chasing for opportunities to also make up for the past and somewhat mend his relationship with his youngest son. It made Bakugou momentarily wonder how the heck did Todoroki end up surrounded by people that lacked conversational skills but he also wasn't ready to admit that he shared that in common with the annoying slob so he quickly yeeted that thought to the other side of the galaxy.

Despite all the troublesome moments it warranted, those two years of living at the Todoroki Abode flew past them fast. Bakugou turned 20 and the following year it was Todoroki's turn. They then at long last obtained the okay to move into their own house from all sides in mid-January and now, at the beginning of September, Bakugou was unpacking their clothes into their new wardrobe.

"Pfft! What the hell?" snorted Kaminari, immediately slapping his hand on his mouth to prevent a laughing attack from occurring. He

pointed with his thumb at a small rectangular side table placed next to the master bedroom's balcony door and teasingly remarked. "I expected to find some kinky stuff in the bedroom of such a passionate couple. Not a table filled with bonsai trees and koala plush toys."

"Shut up! That guy's weird in the weirdest of ways, okay!?" hissed Bakugou, quickly kicking the back of Kaminari's knee in a sudden bout of angry embarrassment. He had thrown all of the blame on Todoroki but more than 60% of the koala-themed objects on top of that table had been purchased by Bakugou. He just couldn't get enough of seeing Todoroki getting all sparkly-eyed whenever he gave him something filled with small, meaningful details about their relationship. And having been dating for several years now, it went without saying that the koala and its tree collection had expanded quite a bit, in the most diverse of ways and items. Only two of said collected items weren't currently on that table but rather on top of the nightstand next to their bed, taking up a big portion of its surface space as the half-assed koala plushie and disproportional bonsai tree they had always been. "You said you were here to help, didn't you? Then get those hands moving and keep on passing me those clothes!"

"Yes, yes~" acknowledged Kaminari with a sing-song voice. He pulled the next cardboard box closer to him and resumed passing the clothes to Bakugou piece by piece so he could store them in the correct places. "Oh by the way! I have a message for you from Kirishima. He's busy in Kyoto with this anti-drugs mission but that very same mission will get him back here in two days as part of the ongoing investigation. He won't be around to help with the moving today but he wants to come to say hello to you two while you're still on your holidays."

"Unfortunately for him, he won't be able to," shortly said Bakugou with a quick shrug of his shoulders.

"Huh? Why not?" inquired Sero, who had arrived at the bedroom mid-conversation. He gestured with his thumb over his shoulder in the door's direction. "I finished unpacking everything that was labelled as kitchen stuff. I put them all nicely in the cupboards but I'm sure you'll

later organise them up to your taste. Anyway, why won't you meet with Kirishima? He's been dying to come to visit you and tell you congratulations for moving in with Todoroki in person since you told him the good news."

"We're going to be away for a couple of days," explained Bakugou, closing the drawer he had been filling with the clothes and then moving to the one below. "We're leaving tomorrow and we'll only be back on the day before I start working again."

"So you're moving into your new house today only to leave it behind tomorrow?" noted Kaminari, an eyebrow slightly arched as he closely observed Bakugou steadily going through yet another drawer. "Damn, as usually, I can't understand the pace with which you two do stuff. Shouldn't you use these days off to relax and get used to your new love nest? Why go on a trip right off the bat?"

"Let them live, Kaminari. They've been so busy with work, they're probably craving some of their crazy dates and couple trips, no?" said Sero, giving a couple of comforting taps to Kaminari's shoulder. He also began to pass the clothes to Bakugou and asked, "Where are you going this time?"

"We're gonna go fulfil a couple of other unspoken promises," was the only thing Bakugou said about that topic, a small smile softening his frowning features. Kaminari and Sero continued pestering him about more details and info on these mysterious 'unspoken promises' but Bakugou simply kept ignoring them until they finally gave up on it.

With both the kitchen and the master bedroom out of the way, Bakugou and his two blabbermouth friends focused their attention once again on the remaining boxes in the living room area, which were mostly random stuff they had brought with them from their respective parents' houses.

“Ugh, I’m starving…” groaned Kaminari, his body tiredly slumping down against the sofa’s backrest. He could both feel and hear his stomach loudly complaining and begging for some sustenance. Kaminari ‘innocently’ turned his puppy-eyed gaze at Bakugou. “Kacchan~ Could you make an exception for today only and make us some-”

“We’re going to be away for a week, we haven’t bought any food yet,” Bakugou cut off almost right away, his gaze stuck on his cellphone’s screen as he quickly typed a message back to the text he had received a couple of minutes ago. “I ain’t gonna spend my money on ingredients that are just going to be rotting away in the fridge while I’m somewhere else.”

“Delivery it is then!” declared Sero, also joining Kaminari on the sofa by nonchalantly throwing his body on the seat next to him. He took his cellphone from his pants’ pocket and got the delivery app installed in it ready to be used and abused. “What do you guys feel like eating?”

“Food’s already on the way here,” said Bakugou without missing a beat yet again. He locked his cellphone’s screen, put it back inside of his pants’ pocket and left the living room without saying anything else. A couple of seconds later, the sound of the front door closing reached Sero’s and Kaminari’s ears.

“What’s that supposed to mean?” inquired Kaminari, completely confused about what had just happened. Sero seemed to be sharing the sentiment, the way he simply shrugged his shoulders while shaking his head.

Several minutes later, they heard the front door opening once again. Still extremely curious about what was going on, they craned their necks over the backrest of the sofa and tried to peek towards the entrance’s direction.

“Well, well, well. Looks like you’re pretty much settled already,” noted Mitsuki, arms crossed over her chest as she carefully surveyed the living room and kitchen area with her sharp eyes. “Guess you won’t need our help after all.”

“I’d say I’m impressed you got it all done so fast while on your own but I can already see you had a couple of extra hands with you after all,” chuckled Rei, a tall tiered bento box snuggly cradled on her arms.

“Ohh! It’s Mom Bakugou and Mom Todoroki!” excitedly said Kaminari and Sero, the former even immediately jumping out of the sofa to go greet the two ladies.

“So you two came to help Katsuki, huh?” snorted Mitsuki, a small knowing smirk on her lips. “I bet he got you slaving away at his beck and call, ahaha!”

“More like, I ordered them around so they wouldn’t get in my way and ruin our entire schedule,” grumbled Bakugou, finally resurfacing once again in the living room. Together with one more visit.

"A BABY!?" yelped Kaminari and Sero at the same time, their eyes nearly jumping out of their sockets and jaws dropping towards the floor at the sight of Bakugou holding a baby in his arms. "Whose baby!?"

"Ahaha. Mom Todoroki is also Grandma Todoroki now," cheerfully chipped in Rei, a big smile on her face as she lovingly glanced at the baby. As usual, the small child seemed to be having the time of her life tugging and tapping on Bakugou. "Isn't she adorable?"

"Now that I think about it, I guess I never mentioned her to you two," scoffed Bakugou as a half-hearted taunt. "Natsuo and his wife popped this squirt out last year."

"Rude much!?" admonished Mitsuki, readily going for the kill and stabbing her hand on the side of Bakugou's torso. "And don't call her 'squirt' either, you dumbass!"

"Ouch!!" howled Bakugou in pain, his body quivering from head to toes at the well-placed jab. "What was that for, old hag!? I call her squirt all the time! She's never complained about it before so who gives a shit!?"

"She's a baby, how the hell would she complain about it, huh!?" continued admonishing Mitsuki, this time slapping the back of Bakugou's head. She released a tired, exasperated sigh and motioned her hands closer to the baby. "C'mon, give her here. You won't be able to eat lunch holding her like that."

"First you tell me to hold her, now you tell me to give her to you. Make up your mind, will ya?" groaned Bakugou, carefully adjusting his hold to the small child before he returned her to his mother's embrace.

"I just find it funny how she's always all over you, even though you think kids are annoying," snickered Mitsuki, gently cradling the baby against her bosom and shoulder and patting her back to keep her from crying at the sudden separation from Bakugou.

"Yes, it truly is fascinating how you ended up becoming her favourite uncle," chuckled Rei, leisurely carrying the tiered bento box to the kitchen so that food could begin being served to everyone, additional two helpers included. "She likes you more than she likes Shouto or Fuyumi, even though they pay her more attention than you do."

"Some things just never change, do they, 'Gou-chan'?" said Sero with a shit-eating grin, Kaminari likewise snickering next to him.

"Ahaha. You're all so damn funny," grumbled Bakugou, sourly stomping his way to the kitchen to help sort out plates and chopsticks for everyone, plus some glasses to serve the bottled juice and tea that Kaminari decided to go to buy from a nearby convenience store to add to their lunch menu.

The tiered bento box was devoured in its entirety at nearly record-breaking speed, seeing as there were two extra mouths to feed.

Mitsuki and Rei had planned to visit their new apartment from the very start, more due to Todoroki's inability to take that day off from work than as a leisure visit while Rei looked after her granddaughter in place of her working parents. They were aware of their sons' planned trip and the departure date so after heavily admonishing Enji for not giving Todoroki the same days off that Bakugou had managed to get in advance, Rei had reassured them she would come to help with the moving if needed. Mitsuki obviously joined her in on the plan since she had the free time to do so at the moment.

As the group animatedly chatted in between themselves, Kaminari and Sero gave a couple more attempts at squeezing out the location of the trip and the mysterious promises but Bakugou still refused to provide them with an answer and both mothers seemed to be in the dark too when it came to the trip's details. They had previously given up on it but if the opportunity presented itself like this, they would surely pounce on it again.

"You didn't get to do much in the end but thanks for passing by, I guess," grumbled Bakugou under his breath as he walked Mitsuki, Rei and the baby to the front door. Once they were in the apartment complex’s corridor, he passed Rei two sets of keys. “I’ll leave those

guys in your hands while we're away. If you don't mind…"

"Sure, I'll look after them," said Rei as she took the keys in her free hand, a happy smile promptly blossoming on her features. It had always amused her how Bakugou only referred to their collection of bonsai trees and koala items as 'those guys'. It also deeply touched her how much he cared and looked after them, even though he always looked so annoyed whenever they were mentioned. The way she saw it, that growing collection was the physical form of her son's love for this man and this man's love for her son - every time one more bonsai or koala plushie or toys was added, she couldn't help but think, ah, they fell in love with each other all over again, didn't they? "Have fun with Shouto during your trip. Don't forget to take some photos for Fuyumi and me, okay?"

"And no getting in trouble there, you hear me?" added Mitsuki, quickly ruffling her son's head before she turned around on her heels and started walking towards the elevator.

"Yeah, yeah," acknowledged Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. He only closed the front door once the elevator's door also closed. When he returned to the living room, Kaminari and Sero were waiting for him on the sofa, a set of mischievous smirks on their faces hinting that they were up to no good once again. Bakugou groaned. "What now?"

"So when's your baby coming~?" asked Kaminari with a teasing sing-song voice. "Boy or girl~?"

"I already knew you guys were idiots but I didn't know it had gotten this bad since our graduation," sighed Bakugou, yet again rolling his eyes around in annoyance as he switched his walking route from the sofas to the kitchen. "Men can't have babies, Dunce Face. Go review some biology classes!"

“I know that!!” yelped Kaminari, his whole face turning a shade of red brighter in embarrassment. “And that’s not even what I meant! Argh, Bakugou, you idiot!”

“You could always adopt,” suggested Sero, teasingly patting the top of Kaminari’s head to calm him down. For some reason, that simple verbal jab had hit Kaminari pretty hard. Perhaps seeing Bakugou with the baby and then getting that kind of answer while talking about having children had made Kaminari regret having asked about it in the first place.

“No way!” scoffed Bakugou as he loaded the dishwasher with their used glasses. He softly kicked the door closed with the heel of his foot and turned to the sofas while gesturing towards the entrance area with his thumb. “The moment Shouto steps inside of this apartment today, he’s mine for the rest of his life. I ain’t gonna share him with anyone else ever again, not even with some brat.”

“……You might have made my heart skip a couple of beats just now,” babbled Kaminari, eyes blinking a couple of times in quick succession to check if they weren’t deceiving him. That had been one hell of a smile, accompanied by one killer line. Kaminari had thought he had accidentally said something he shouldn’t have but it turns out that Bakugou was more than okay with it - actually, he seemed extremely happy that that was the case. Different strokes for different folks, apparently.

“Ewww… That’s disgusting. Get away from me, you pervert,” spat Bakugou, his face scrunching up into a disgusted expression.

“Huh!? What’s that supposed to mean!?” yelped Kaminari, nearly choking on his own words. He jumped from the sofa and accusingly pointed with his index finger at Bakugou as he continued sorting stuff in the kitchen. “You’ve been dating a man since high school! What’s with the ‘eww, that’s disgusting’!? Are you trying to say I’m disgusting? Is that why I’m still single? Why I have yet to get a

girlfriend? Is that it!? Sero, stop laughing and say something! Which is it!? Ahhhh!”

The rest of the afternoon was spent with Kaminari and Sero annoying the heck out of Bakugou, though never to the point he forcibly kicked them out of his apartment. They no longer had much to organise so they were talking and bickering in between themselves most of the time rather than working around the house. Still, time quickly ticked by and when they noticed, the sun was starting to set and the front door was being unlocked.

“Katsuki, I’m home,” said Todoroki’s voice, coming from the entrance area. A couple of soft footsteps later, Todoroki’s head was popping up in the living room. “Oh. Sero and Kaminari are here too?”

“Hey~!” greeted Kaminari, raising one of his hands high in the air. “Sorry for barging into your and Kacchan’s new love nest. We did help him organise all of your stuff so the debt has been repaid in full.”

“You’re late…” grumbled Bakugou, a sulking look on his face as he dropped the back of his head on the backrest of the sofa and leaned it backwards to be able to peek at Todoroki as he walked towards him.

“Sorry, I got stopped by several people on my way out of the agency,” explained Todoroki, placing a bottle on top of the sofa right next to Bakugou’s head before he leaned down for a quick peck on his lips. He tapped the bottle of alcohol with the pads of his fingers. “This is from Midoriya. His housewarming gift, I guess?”

“Why does everyone want us to get drunk?” groaned Bakugou with a roll of his eyes. He pushed the bottle away from him, only not knocking it down on the floor because Todoroki was still holding it. “Get that thing far, far away from me. Drinking anything given to us by the Shitty Nerd will only make me puke my guts out.”

“The sidekicks at the agency were all saying it's good quality sake though?” pointed out Todoroki, his head tilted to the left as he glanced from the bottle to Bakugou then to the bottle once again.

“Don’t care. Don’t want it,” said Bakugou with a resolute ‘hmph’ and a sulky turn of his head. With it, he switched his attention back to his friends. “And how long are you two planning to stick around for? Got nothing better to do during your days off so you come here to bother me during *my* days off?”

“Oh, so since Todoroki’s home now, you no longer want us around, huh?” sighed Sero with fake surprised hurt. He tapped the back of his hand on Kaminari’s chest and started getting up from the sofa. “I guess it’s no longer ‘bros before hoes’ now that you’re officially shacking up with your high school sweetheart. Poor us… The third wheels will take their leave now, then.”

“Thanks,” acknowledged Todoroki, a small smile on his lips as he waved goodbye with his hand at both Sero and Kaminari.

Yup, there are some things that really never change, inwardly groaned the two of them, their eyes blankly staring at the innocent, almost child-like, casual semblance on Todoroki’s face despite the hurtful kick his single-word reply to Sero’s sarcasm had given them. It sure had been a while since they had last experienced Todoroki’s accidental stabbing denseness.

Contrary to Todoroki, however, they did know how to read the room so they had known from the start that their visit to Bakugou’s new apartment would end the moment Todoroki arrived home. Sero and Kaminari were aware of how long Bakugou and Todoroki had waited to get their own home, their own little space, a place meant for them only. It was a little bit less than three years of shared dorm life, followed by two years of living with parents and siblings - they more

than earned the right to be left unbothered now that they had acquired their so yearned for palace.

Not to mention, they far preferred to walk out on their own than be kicked out by a flurry of cusses and hellish pillars of flames.

“Geez, those two are still the same pain in the ass of always,” sighed Bakugou, only sideways glancing towards the entrance area as he let Todoroki do the walking out this time. Once Todoroki popped up again, he asked, “Ready to go?”

“Yeah. Did you prepare our bags and did you only have time to unpack our things?” asked Todoroki in return, leisurely plopping his body down next to Bakugou on the sofa. The arched eyebrow on his lover’s brows seemed to spell a smug ‘I obviously got everything done, who do you think I am’. If that was the case, Todoroki wouldn’t miss such an opportunity. He leaned closer to Bakugou, one of his hands snaking its way into the blonde’s rough palm and slender fingers. He unhurriedly kissed and tasted his lips, unlike the previous rushed welcome home peck. Once he parted their mouths with a satisfied sigh, he whispered. “We have enough time for a small break, right?”

“Like hell we do,” snorted Bakugou, nevertheless going along with Todoroki’s gentle caresses and playful nibbles to his bottom lip. He was planning to take his cellphone out of his pants’ pocket and show Todoroki how truly late it already was but the next kiss, one that nearly took his breath away, made him completely forget about it. Guess it couldn’t be helped. Bakugou wrapped his arms around Todoroki’s neck and tugged him closer, their bodies slowly falling backwards on the soft cushions of the sofa in tandem. “I’ll kill you if we miss our flight.”

“It might be coming two years later than planned but didn’t I tell you that living together would be fun?” pointed out Todoroki, a small mischievous smirk tugging at the corner of his lips as he slowly kissed Bakugou again and again.

“Hah! Bring it on,” smugly sneered Bakugou, repaying Todoroki’s smirk with one of his own. He promptly evaded his lover’s next kiss and softly chomped on the tip of his nose instead. Bakugou teasingly giggled at him. “I ain’t gonna make it easy on you though.”

After a small moment of silence, both Bakugou and Todoroki started laughing. They were tight on time but every single second of that ‘small break’ before their trip was worth it.

-.-

One more customer stepped inside of the izakaya, slightly shaking his jacket and spiky red hair from the droplets of rain that had stuck to him despite using an umbrella.

“Oh! Kirishima-kun! We’re over here!” said Uraraka, cheerfully waving her hand at her former classmate to signalise the group’s location in the cosy bar. She made space for Kirishima to sit next to her, switching from her chair to the one Midoriya had been using as he had also moved to the empty seat on his right as soon as he had spotted that familiar spiky red hair. “How’s living in Kyoto being?”

“Great so far. I really can’t get tired of the food there, it’s just so damn good!” confessed Kirishima, a beaming smile on his face as he occupied the offered seat. “What about you guys? I’m constantly hearing news about you, Midoriya, be it through the usual networks, be it through Bakugou’s bitching.”

“Ahaha… I want to interpret that as a good thing but you mentioning Kacchan makes me think otherwise,” awkwardly laughed Midoriya, his fingers restlessly fidgeting against an empty yakitori skewer.

“Bakugou’s always bitching about you doing or not doing any and

everything so take Kirishima's words as a compliment, Midoriya," scoffed Sero with a roll of his eyes. He took a quick gulp of his beer and then settled the mug back on the table. "And speaking of him and his bitching, he and Todoroki will probably never get to drink that bottle of sake you gave them. His instant reaction to it was 'get it out of my sight'."

"Of course it was…" groaned Midoriya, his face promptly getting buried in the palms of his hands.

"It was actually quite funny to see that one," snickered Kaminari, gently pulling a piece of yakitori from the skewer with his teeth. "It was funny and we managed to get some dirt on Bakugou thanks to us going there to help him move into their new apartment. You guys will never guess what we found in their bedroom, hehehe~"

"For safety reasons, I don't think we want or should try to guess, Kaminari-chan," pointed out Asui with a warning glance. "You still remember our first year living in the dorm, right?"

"I still have nightmares about our first year living in the dorm…" nearly whimpered Kaminari, both his shoulders and head slumping down in defeat. They all laughed at Kaminari's overdramatic sobs and sniffles, but they all shared the same sentiment about their dorm life's 'dark age'. He quickly perked up once again after taking another bite out of his yakitori skewers, though. "Midoriya! You're Bakugou's lifelong stalker plus you're close friends with Todoroki, right? Then you should know the answer to this one! Where did they plan to go this time during their days off?"

"Eh? I don't know," said Midoriya, softly shaking his head in denial. He also wanted to deny the stalker accusations for the millionth time but what good would that do him? His reputation had long been tarnished and reduced to that criminal label exclusively, at least as far as his former high school classmates were concerned.

“Probably climbing some sort of mountain again, no?” noted Kirishima, once again joining in on the conversation now that he had finished placing his order. “Maybe several of them, since they took so many days off together. Or maybe it was someplace far away from here? I’m sure they’ll tell us all about it once their holidays are over!”

“I know but I’m still curious about it~” whined Kaminari, throwing a small tantrum about his lack of intel. “Bakugou was being all smug about it, rubbing on our faces his lovey-dovey love story with Todoroki, which annoyingly enough, still seems to be in the exact same honeymoon phase that it was when they first started dating. That evil gremlin has no heart whatsoever when it comes to us single folks, I tell ya!!”

“I think you already had enough to drink for tonight,” sighed Sero, pushing Kaminari’s beer mug aside once he tried to grab a hold of it to drown his frustrations with alcohol.

“You call it annoying but I’m super glad to hear they’re still the same lovey-dovey couple of always,” confessed Kirishima, yet another blinding, beaming grin popping up on his lips as he stuffed his hand on his pocket to grab his vibrating cellphone. “After so many years together, it would be weirder if they stopped being all sickly sweet with one another all of a- Oh. Speaking of the devil, ahaha!”

[Bakugou] Trolltunga has been conquered

-- Bakugou has sent a photo --

“Tro what now?” blurted out Kirishima, an eyebrow slightly arched as he tried to decipher that seemingly nonsensical word. Seeing his confusion, everybody leaned closer and took a peek at his cellphone’s screen as Kirishima opened the attached photo. It took less than a second for the photo to load but the emotional charge that went hand-

in-hand with it made that second last for much, much longer for all of them. A small snort escaped Kirishima's lips but his voice was quivering a fair bit as he breathed out, "Man, these two really are on another level…"

"Oh no, I think I'm going to cry," croaked Uraraka, already sniffling slightly as she wiped the corner of her tear-stained eyes with the back of her finger.

"Did… Did they…?" babbled Kaminari, his eyes nearly jumping out of their sockets as he gawked at the photo.

"They sure did!" laughed Sero, so happy with that news that he inadvertently slapped Kaminari's back with a little bit too much strength. He went to fetch his beer mug and returned it to his friend. "You can drink for a little while longer after all. You're gonna need your beer for the incoming toast!"

"What should I do now? What am I supposed to do?" mumbled Midoriya in a flustered panic, his eyes jumping back and forth everywhere as he slowly reached out for his beer mug too. "I-If Kacchan doesn't accept my housewarming gift, he definitely won't accept my wedding gift either, will he!?"

"You can think about that once they come back from their honeymoon," chuckled Asui, likewise grabbing her glass of yuzu-flavoured chuhai.

"To a happy and looooooooong marriage!" loudly announced Kirishima, readily snatching his beer mug from the waiter's tray as soon as he stopped next to their table.

"CHEERS!!!" the group happily screamed, soon followed by the loud

clattering and clinking of their glasses clashing together and some amused laughs and whistles coming from other customers due to the volume of Kirishima's voice.

The marriage announcement had arrived at them in the shape of a paradisiacal photo.

Stony mountains and rock formations gently dusted in pure white snow in the distance, a bright baby blue sky dotted with some fluffy clouds that contrasted with the darker shade of blue coming from the river below the vertigo-inducing naturally formed stone platform where they stood.

But the star of the show wasn't the location.

Bakugou was smugly sticking his tongue out while throwing the middle finger at the camera. Todoroki stood right next to him looking as expressionless as usual, one of his arms around his shoulder as he shaped a V sign with his other hand.

Only a blind person would have missed the sparkling rings in the ring finger of their left hands.

Chapter End Notes

> And Heat Index has come to an end. First of all, I want to thank you for reading all the way to the last chapter! 82 chapters, huh... Some would say it's quite a lot of chapters, some would say there should be even more of them. I'm on the latter side, ahahaha!
> I started writing this fic as a way to vent about the heat wave ongoing at the time, I never expected it to grow so much, to end up becoming so emotionally attached to this story. It was relaxing, heartwarming, sweet, smutty at times, funny, domestic, fluffy, it was everything I could ask for! Hence, I am now nearly bawling my eyes out since it's over OTL Mixed feelings of feeling proud of finishing a multi-chapter fic and not wanting it to end,

ya know?
Once again, thank you very much for reading, thank you very much for all the comments, support and fanart you've sent me! I might not say much in the comment section, but I read and appreciate every single comment <3

End Notes

Thank you very much for reading all the way to the end. If you want to read some more extra chapters/short stories related to this fic, as well as show a little bit of support, please go here :D

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!